



A LEGACY FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

The Norman Parks & Recreation Master Plan

A Legacy for the Next Generation

The Norman Parks and Recreation Master Plan

December 2009



 HALFF

 water's edge
aquatic design

CEHP/LLC Inc.
Turco & Assoc.



Letter of Transmittal

December 29, 2009

City of Norman
Mr. Jud Foster
Director of Parks and Recreation
201 West Gray, Building C
Norman, OK 73069

Reference: Final Report - Norman Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Dear Mr. Foster:

Halff Associates is pleased to present the final report of the 2009 Norman Parks and Recreation Master Plan entitled *A Legacy For The Next Generation*. This plan is meant to reflect the needs and desires of the residents of Norman. A significant amount of public input went into formulating the plan, and as such the recommendations that were formed out of the planning process mirror needs that the residents of Norman deemed as important. The many recommendations of this Master Plan are part of a comprehensive analysis and include actions that address immediate needs, as well as ones that are meant to be implemented long term.

Halff Associates is honored to have worked with you, the Parks and Recreation Department Staff, the Master Plan Steering Committee, elected officials of Norman and the citizens of Norman.

Sincerely,
Halff Associates, Inc.

Jim Carrillo, ASLA, AICP
Vice President, Director of Planning





Resolution

R-0910-70

RESOLUTION NO. R-0910-70

A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORMAN, OKLAHOMA, ADOPTING THE NORMAN PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN AND DIRECTING AND PROVIDING GUIDANCE TO CITY STAFF AS IT PROCEEDS WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PLAN TO IMPLEMENT THE RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE PLAN.

- § 1. WHEREAS, the Council of the City of Norman recognizes the need for a Strategic Parks and Recreation Master Plan ("the Plan") to provide goals, assessments, standards, recommendations and strategies for implementation over a ten year period in an effort to provide for and continually improve park and recreational facilities, provide trail opportunities, preserve open spaces, and rehabilitate existing parks in the City of Norman; and
 - § 2. WHEREAS, the primary objective of the Plan is to serve Norman's residents of all ages by providing recreational services desired by the citizens of Norman and acquire needed open spaces and preserve natural resources; and
 - § 3. WHEREAS, in order to address recreational needs in the future, the City of Norman has sought input from the citizens of Norman through surveys, public input meetings, meetings with stakeholder groups, and the Parks and Recreation staff; and that input has been incorporated into the Plan; and
 - § 4. WHEREAS, the Master Plan Steering Committee has participated in development of the Plan and reviewed the final Plan and recommends it for adoption; and
 - § 5. WHEREAS, the Board of Park Commissioners has reviewed the Plan and recommends it for adoption; and
 - § 6. WHEREAS, the City Council, having taken into consideration the results of the in-depth study conducted by Half Associates for the City of Norman determines that the Plan is reasonable.
- NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORMAN, OKLAHOMA,
- § 7. That The Norman Parks and Recreation Master Plan for the City of Norman, Oklahoma, is hereby officially adopted, as attached hereto and incorporated herein for all intents and purposes.

- § 8. That an Action Plan has been developed to prioritize implementation of the Plan to guide the rehabilitation of existing parks, provide guidance in the application of funding, and suggest alternative funding mechanisms.
- § 9. Adoption of the Plan shall not commit the City of Norman to specific funding levels and/or implementation strategies, but shall provide a guidance plan for the City's vision for availability and growth of park and recreational services.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 24th day of November, 2009.


Mayor

ATTEST:


City Clerk



Acknowledgements

The Norman Parks and Recreation Master Plan was developed by the City of Norman Parks and Recreation Department with the technical assistance and design help of Halff Associates Inc. A special thanks goes to the many residents, landowners, business owners, and community leaders for their insight and support throughout the duration of this study.

City Council Members

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Tom Kovach, Ward 2
Hal Ezzell, Ward 3
Carol Dillingham, Ward 4
Rachel Butler, Ward 5
Dr. James Griffith, Ward 6
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Board of Parks Commissioners

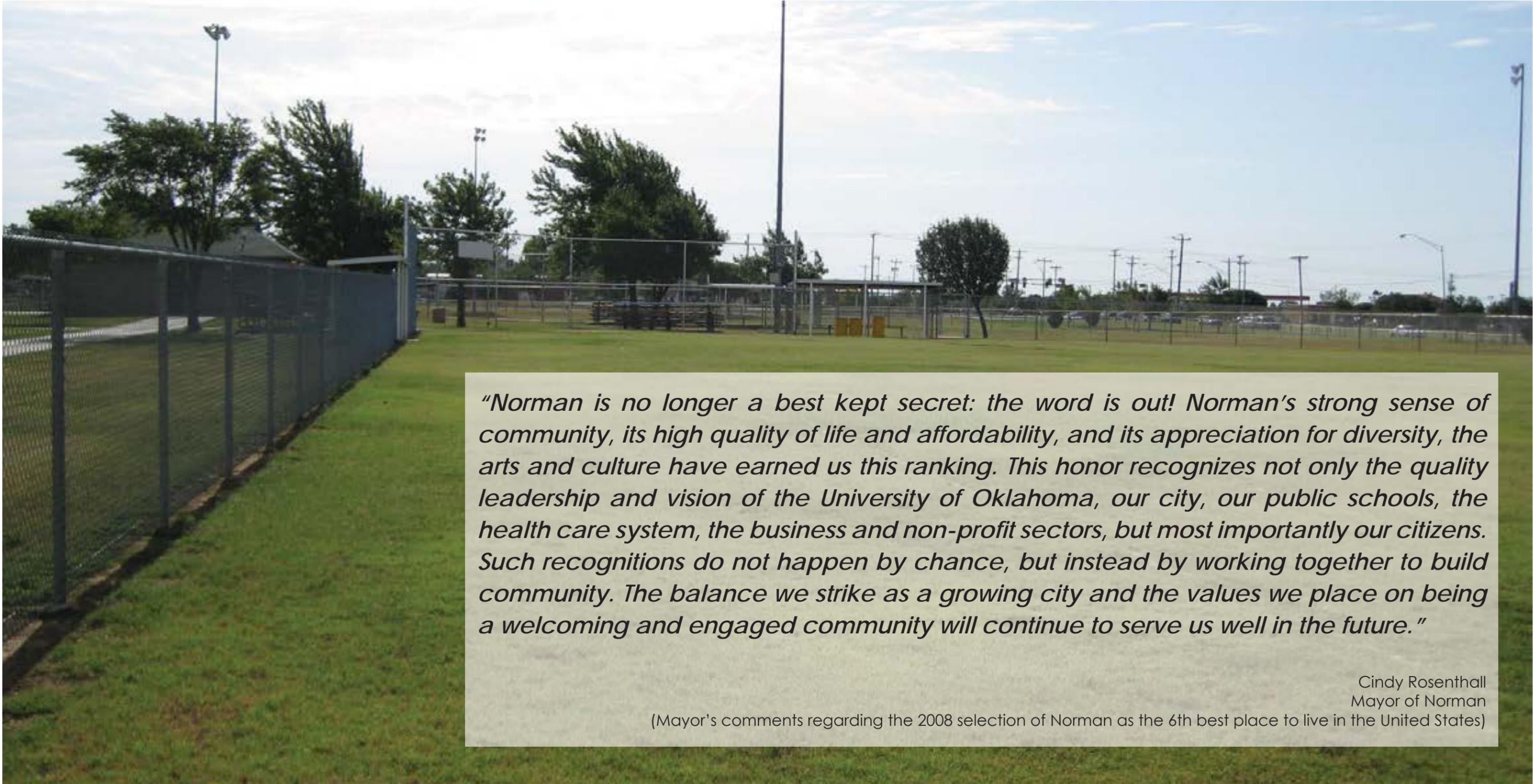
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“Norman is no longer a best kept secret: the word is out! Norman’s strong sense of community, its high quality of life and affordability, and its appreciation for diversity, the arts and culture have earned us this ranking. This honor recognizes not only the quality leadership and vision of the University of Oklahoma, our city, our public schools, the health care system, the business and non-profit sectors, but most importantly our citizens. Such recognitions do not happen by chance, but instead by working together to build community. The balance we strike as a growing city and the values we place on being a welcoming and engaged community will continue to serve us well in the future.”

Cindy Rosenthal
Mayor of Norman

(Mayor's comments regarding the 2008 selection of Norman as the 6th best place to live in the United States)





Chapter 1

Introduction to the Planning Process



Chapter 1

Introduction to the Parks and Recreation Planning Process

"We should so live and labor in our times that what came to us as seed may go to the next generation as blossom, and what came to us as blossom may go to them as fruit."

Henry Ward Beecher



Introduction

The City of Norman is a very desirable place to live, work and play. In fact, Norman was ranked by *Money Magazine* as the sixth best place to live in the nation in 2008. When residents are asked what it is they like about Norman, they invariably responded that they liked having large city amenities with a small town feel. In fact, one fear expressed by Norman residents is over-development resulting in the deterioration of the City's small town character.

Norman experiences many pressures to develop. Developers see the opportunity to profit in a place that is attractive to new home buyers which are drawn to the University of Oklahoma, the easy and close access to Oklahoma City along I-35, excellent municipal facilities, ample recreational amenities, a downtown, and a place that has a sense of being home.

However, it is when such development happens without consideration for the character and need for open space and pedestrian connections, that the quality of life in Norman will be compromised for everyone. From its rural character to its modern athletic facilities, residents in Norman should feel proud to be part of a community that treasures and seeks to cultivate the health, safety, welfare and image of the City and its people.

Well developed parks and natural areas are often the first place that visitors view in a community. In fact parks are one of the most visible elements of a city government at work, and can instill a strong sense of pride in the residents of a community. A great park system lets both citizens and visitors know that the leadership of the city is interested in providing the best for its citizens. The leadership in Norman has long recognized that recreation plays an important role in the quality of life in Norman, and that a strong recreation system provides for a healthier environment,

improves the well-being of children and young adults, and reduces the potential for crime in the City.

The Need for Parks and Recreation

Planning in Norman

The purpose of this Parks and Recreation Master Plan is to provide an assessment of Norman's parks and recreation system in the year 2009. The parks and recreation planning process allows the citizens of Norman to determine what their preferred priorities should be for the next five to ten years.

A Parks and Recreation Master Plan is exactly what its name indicates. "Parks" refer to the land dedicated to outdoor areas programmed for recreation. "Recreation" refers to both active and passive activities including athletic sports, playing on playgrounds, jogging, picnicking, enjoying nature, etc.

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan aims to:

- ▶ Point out opportunities and recommend alternatives for improving the parks and recreation system.
- ▶ Look at the potential growth of the City over the next five to ten years, and types of facilities that are most needed.
- ▶ Guide City staff in acquiring land to meet current and future park and open space needs.
- ▶ Prioritize key recommendations of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan so that the most significant deficiencies are addressed as quickly as possible.
- ▶ Guide City staff and City leaders in determining where and how parks and recreation funding should be allocated over the next five to ten years.





The Value and Benefits of Parks and Recreation in Norman

A superior parks and recreation system in a city increases the quality of life because of the many benefits that it offers to that community. Parks are the single most visible positive expression of a city government at work. Benefits of parks and recreation may include personal health benefits, community benefits, environmental benefits, and economic benefits.

Personal Health Benefits of parks and recreation include:

- ▶ Increasing the frequency of exercise especially among children and youth with better access to parks.
- ▶ Improving psychological and social health with exposure to nature.
- ▶ Playing which is critical for child development.
- ▶ Reducing the risk of heart disease, diabetes, obesity, depression, and other health problems by staying active.

Community Benefits of parks and recreation include:

- ▶ Providing opportunities for all people to be physically active, socially engaged, and cognitively stimulated.
- ▶ Providing opportunities for rest, relaxation, and revitalization.
- ▶ Preserving and interpreting historic community assets.
- ▶ Providing opportunities for community involvement and volunteer work.
- ▶ Providing refuges of safety for at-risk youth which can help reduce juvenile delinquency.

Environmental Benefits of parks and recreation include:

- ▶ Protecting and preserving vital green space.
- ▶ Protecting and preserving critical wildlife habitat.
- ▶ Educating visitors regarding the appropriate use of natural areas for recreation.
- ▶ Contributing to clean air and clean water.

Economic Benefits of parks and recreation include:

- ▶ Making the City significantly more attractive.

- ▶ Increasing resale value and property taxes of homes. Studies have proven that the property value of homes near parks have a higher value than those further from a park, which correlates to higher resale values and property taxes.
- ▶ Stimulating economic development by attracting businesses and keeping residents.
- ▶ Increasing tourism.
- ▶ Attracting new businesses to a community by improving the standard of living and quality of life.

Role of the City of Norman in Providing Recreational Opportunities

The City of Norman is the primary governmental entity charged with providing recreational facilities for the citizens of Norman. Ancillary recreational facilities are provided by the State of Oklahoma (at Lake Thunderbird State Park), Norman Public Schools, Cleveland County, the University of Oklahoma (for students, faculty, and staff), various neighborhood associations, and the Cleveland County YMCA.

Master Plan Timeframe

The Norman Parks and Recreation Master Plan is formulated to address the timeframe from the year 2009 until the year 2020.

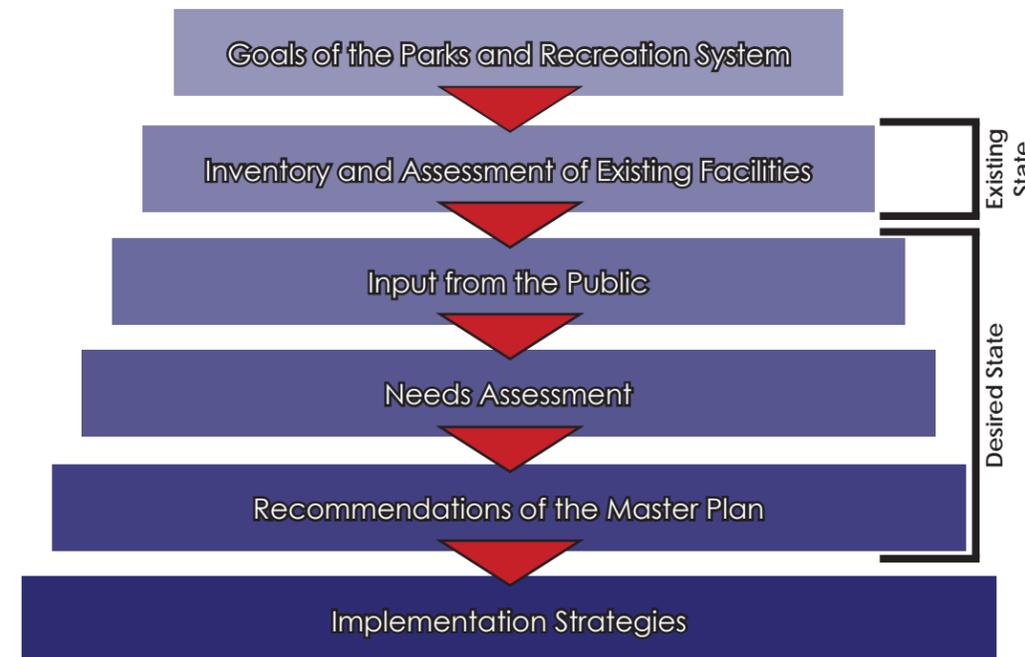
It is recommended that this comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan be completely updated after a ten year period, or before if any major developments occur which significantly alter the recreation needs of the City. It is also recommended that an annual review workshop hosted by the Norman Parks and Recreation Department staff and the Board of Park Commissioners be held to discuss progress over the last year. Citizen input should be frequently sought, not just during the planning process, but throughout the year. In all cases, public involvement through citizen meetings, interviews and workshops should be included in any interim or major update of the plan.

The Parks and Recreation Master Planning Process

The planning process can be expressed by the flow chart shown below. The single most important characteristic of the process is the input received from Norman citizens, elected officials, and staff. This plan is built upon the expressed needs, concerns and dreams of the residents of Norman.

The plan is divided into sections that address the existing state (existing facilities) and the desired state (key needs); then lays out recommendations for key park facilities and major programs for the city. The plan divides each recommendation into two categories:

- ▶ The first part addresses those actions that are immediate and that must be undertaken to renovate or better utilize existing facilities. It also addresses actions that meet the needs of today's population.
- ▶ The second part of each set of recommendations addresses longer range, visionary actions that can maintain Norman's position as one of the best parks and recreation systems in the State of Oklahoma.





Goals of the Master Plan

Goals are included to serve as a policy and philosophical framework for the Master Plan. They serve to guide parks and recreation planning in Norman even as Councils and staff change over the years. Goals can be as specific or general as the planners of the parks and recreation system feel comfortable, but once established should be followed diligently and consistently.

The goals for the Norman Parks and Recreation Master Plan reflect on:

- ▶ Providing a variety of recreation facilities and programs to meet the ultimate recreational needs and desires of the City of Norman's growing population.
- ▶ Creating a park system that is visible and a highly noticeable part of Norman.
- ▶ Creating a park system that will improve the physical form and appearance of the City of Norman.
- ▶ Preserving and enhancing Norman's open space, cultural landscapes and natural resources - especially areas with topography change and indigenous tree cover, as well as land prone to flooding.
- ▶ Providing an open space system which links parks, schools, greenbelts, open spaces, and cultural landscapes.
- ▶ Providing a tool to coordinate multi-jurisdictional efforts with respect to issues that affect recreational opportunities in the community.
- ▶ Continuing to maintain all of Norman's parks and recreational facilities in a superior and sustainable condition.
- ▶ Developing other funding mechanisms to help supplement the city's limited funding resources.
- ▶ Including a citizen participation process in all ongoing park planning and design, as well as updating the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Goals Terminology

The terms "policies," "goals," and "objectives" as used in this report,

follow the definitions shown below.

- ▶ **Policies:** Planning Policies consist of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan itself and specific actions and ordinances created by the Norman City Council to implement the goals established in this document.
- ▶ **Goals:** Goals are general statements concerning an aspect of the city's desired ultimate physical, social and economic environment. Goals address the desired quality of life.
- ▶ **Objectives:** Objectives express the actions or approaches that are necessary to achieve the stated goals, or portions of those goals, without assigning responsibility to any specific actions. Objectives are often expressed as actions that can be measured.

Goals and Objectives of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Goals are included in the parks and recreation planning process to serve as a guiding force for the continual improvement of the parks and recreation system during the next ten years. The following is a set of goals and objectives of the Norman Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Goal #1 - Provide parkland, a variety of recreation facilities, and programs to meet the changing recreational needs and desires of the City of Norman's population.

- ▶ 1.1 Develop short and long-range programs for development, expansion and upgrading of Norman's parks and recreation system.
- ▶ 1.2 Provide recreational facilities that address the needs of multiple age groups, young and old, active and passive, and in all socio-economic categories.
- ▶ 1.3 Identify parks and recreation planning areas with the greatest need for park facilities and pursue the acquisition and development of facilities in those areas.
- ▶ 1.4 Use diverse and reasonable criteria to identify parks and recreation needs, including needs by sector, and reasonable

calculations of the potential level of use not only the ability of each facility to respond to citywide needs in a cost effective manner.

- ▶ 1.5 Develop land acquired and dedicated to future parks in a consistent and focused manner.
- ▶ 1.6 Balance the distribution of park facilities, including neighborhood parks, community parks, athletic facilities, and trail corridors throughout the city.
- ▶ 1.7 Periodically update the long-range plan and standard to reflect changing conditions in the City and to provide a forum for citizen input.

Goal #2 - Create a parks and recreation system that will improve the physical form and image of the City of Norman.

- ▶ 2.1 Acquire park, greenbelt and open space sites that are prominent and highly visible in the neighborhoods that surround them.
- ▶ 2.2 Utilize landscape design at key City entryways and along selected street medians to create a positive and attractive image of the city.
- ▶ 2.3 Encourage well-planned systematic tree planting in parks and street frontage.
- ▶ 2.4 Develop identification and directional signage for key destinations and park facilities that is consistent and unique to Norman.

Goal #3 - Preserve and protect open space, cultural landscapes and natural resources - especially areas with topography change, indigenous tree cover, prairie land and land prone to flooding within the city limits.

- ▶ 3.1 [As part of the citywide parks and recreation planning and development process] Establish criteria to identify key open space areas, cultural landscapes, and natural areas worthy of preservation throughout the City.
- ▶ 3.2 Protect areas and landscapes of cultural value including general landscapes, and specific views and vistas.
- ▶ 3.3 Protect areas with geological and topographical interest.
- ▶ 3.4 Acquire and preserve channels and floodplain areas as public open space and possible future trail corridors.
- ▶ 3.5 Acquire and preserve publicly accessible greenbelts along the edges of all creeks.





Other Master Plans In Norman

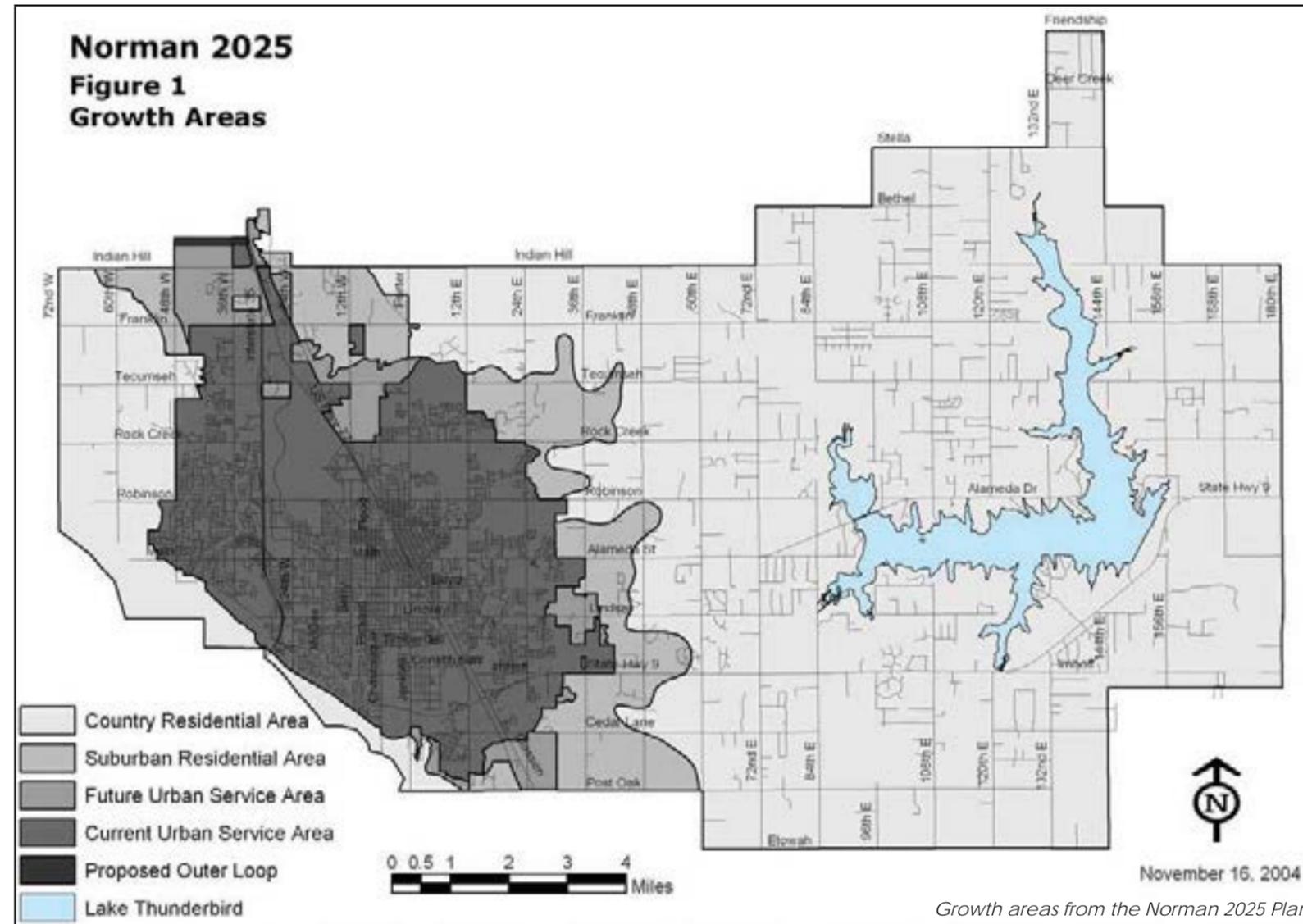
Part of the master planning process for a citywide parks system includes knowing what other recreational providers are planning. Often times the recommendations of other plans can help fulfill a deficiency that is lacking and can prevent the City from duplicating unnecessary parks and recreation facilities. The following pages summarize other related master plans that influenced this comprehensive Park Master Plan. They include the Norman 2025 Land Use and Transportation Master Plan, Ruby Grant Park Master Plan, and Cleveland County Parks Master Plan.

Norman 2025 Land Use and Transportation Plan

In 2004, the City of Norman began the process of developing a citywide comprehensive land use and transportation plan which was intended to guide the development of Norman over the next twenty years. This land use development plan incorporates residential, commercial, industrial, and educational uses, as well as open space and greenbelt preservation uses. The protection of the rural environment and the provision of a greenbelt system are both goals of the 2025 Land Use and Transportation Plan. These goals can have a direct impact on the acquisition of parkland and lands to be used as preserved open space. Other goals of the 2025 Land Use and Transportation Plan which directly relate to parks and recreation in Norman include:

- ▶ Goal 2, Objective 6: Orient parks and recreational facilities to the needs of all Norman's citizens, including persons with disabilities, senior citizens, young children, and teenagers; and provide for a variety of interests and activities.
- ▶ Goal 3, Objective 3: Encourage opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle facilities in and between neighborhoods and other activity areas.
- ▶ Goal 5: Retain the distinct character of rural Norman and protect the environmentally sensitive Little River Drainage Basin.

▶ Goal 6: Develop and maintain a greenbelt system for Norman. The preservation of the Little River Drainage Basin provides a significant amount of permanent open space in the City as well as need for flood control. The development of a greenbelt system will provide opportunities for trails in Norman which can be used for recreation and as an alternative means of transportation throughout the City.



Growth areas from the Norman 2025 Plan





The 1969 Parks Master Plan

The City of Norman completed its first Parks Master Plan in August, 1969. The park plan was part of the Norman Urban Area General Plan, and was prepared by the Norman Planning Department, Norman Parks and Recreation Department and Norman School Board. This 1969 Park Plan is similar to the planning effort the City is currently undertaking in regards to parks. The 1969 Plan set goals for the system, inventoried and assessed current parks, and proposed implementation policies to establish future parks.

Principles of the Norman Urban Area General Plan included:

- ▶ Sites will be acquired for a centrally located neighborhood park in each neighborhood. This park will be combined with the elementary school wherever possible in order that the two can function as the neighborhood center for cultural, educational and recreational activities.
- ▶ Recreation areas will be provided in central locations wherever possible, in all living and working areas, and in areas of outstanding beauty sufficient to meet the varying needs of the people to be served.
- ▶ Reaves Park will be developed as a city-wide facility for use by people of all ages.
- ▶ At least two new community parks will be developed. One will be located on the west side of the urbanized area and at least one on the east side.
- ▶ A City golf course will be developed in the northern portion of the urbanized area.

The goals of the 1969 Park Plan were:

- ▶ To provide maximum opportunities for all types of recreational activities for all residents.
- ▶ To conserve and develop the unique recreational potentials of the newly developing areas east of the recently urbanized areas.
- ▶ To fully develop all areas and facilities now owned by the City.
- ▶ To acquire and develop park and open space lands and facilities adequate to meet the needs of the rapidly expanding total urban community.

The 1969 Park Plan calculated deficiencies based on the current number of facilities and a target level of service. Major deficiencies in the system that existed in 1969 were:

- ▶ 1 indoor swimming pool
- ▶ 1 lighted football field
- ▶ 7 tennis courts
- ▶ 4 gymnasiums
- ▶ 1 auditorium
- ▶ 4 arts and crafts workshops
- ▶ 19 multiple use rooms

Key implementation steps and recommendations of the 1969 Park Plan were:

1. Adopt this report as the Park Plan for Norman, Oklahoma incorporating the updated park plan and policies as a part of the Community Facilities Plan of the Norman Urban Area General Plan.
2. Establish priorities, based on needs, for the acquisition of new neighborhood and community parks as proposed in the Park Plan.
3. Establish priorities for the acquisition of specific lands for the expansion of existing parks.
4. Prepare development plans for the improvement of all existing and proposed parks.
5. Acquire new neighborhood and community parks and acquire the land necessary for the proposed expansion of existing parks according to the priority schedule established in steps 2 and 3, and utilizing applicable financing methods.
6. Establish a program to improve all parks, giving consideration to both needs and financing methods available.
7. Amend the appropriate ordinances to provide for public acquisition and improvement and/or private improvement of recreational needs as determined under step 5.

The 1969 Park Plan also references implementation strategies for open space in Norman. The Norman Area Open Space Plan was part of the Norman Area Plan Report adopted in 1964. The recommended methods of preserving open space were identified as purchase of title, purchase of easements, regulatory devices, and extension of public services. The uses and benefits of open space were identified as conservation of natural resources, separation of urban areas, recreation and park areas, and miscellaneous uses such as cemeteries, boulevards, quarries, landfills, or large lot residences.



Introduction page to the 1969 Park Plan





Storm Water Master Plan

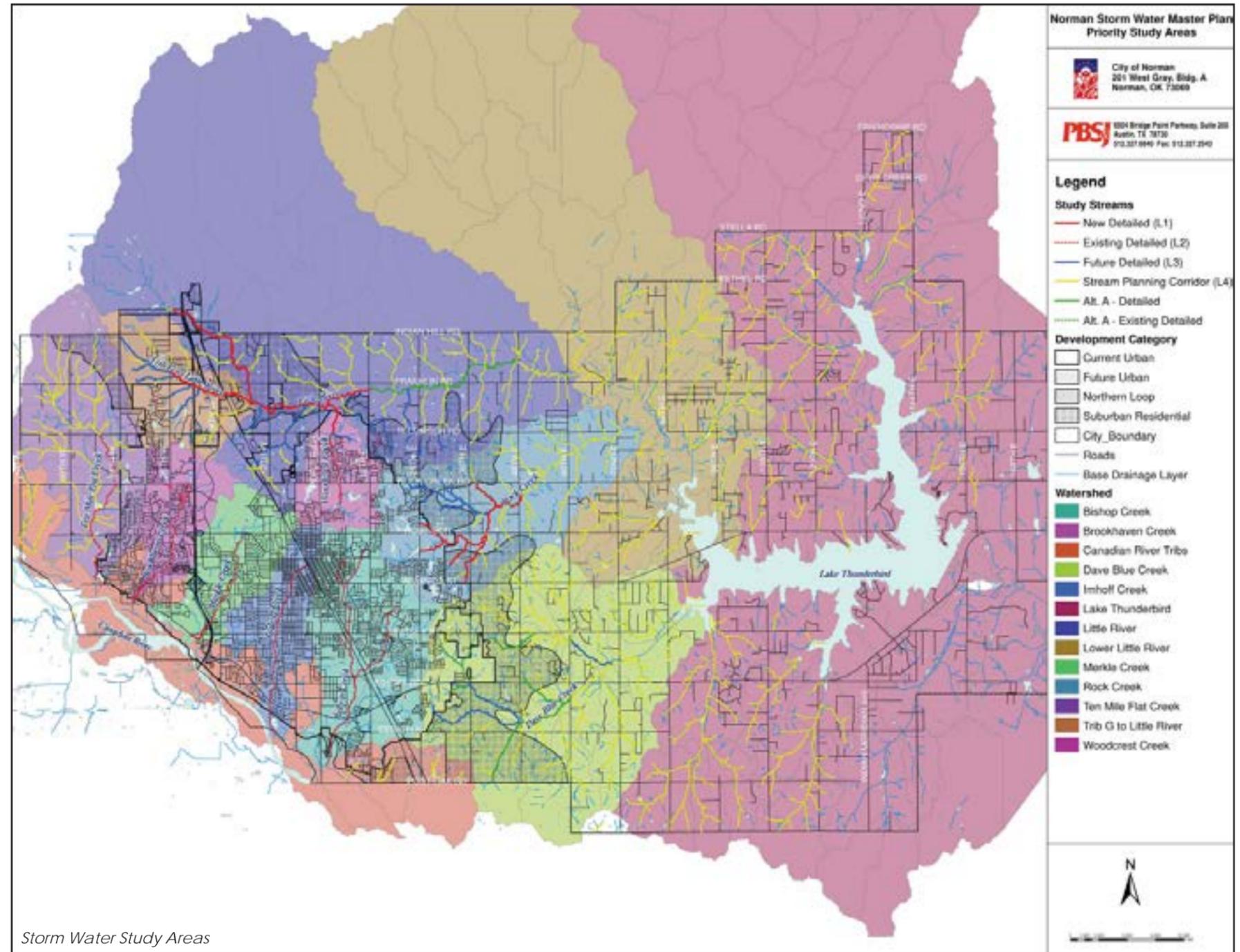
In the summer of 2007, the City of Norman initiated the development of a Storm Water Master Plan with a Greenways Master Plan component. The Storm Water and Greenways Master Plans are in the review and approval process by the City of Norman. The Storm Water Master Plan is intended to give City staff and elected officials a better understanding of how storm water impacts Norman in terms of flooding, water quality and erosion.

The Storm Water Master Plan divided the City into study areas by its 15 different major watersheds. The watersheds carry water into Norman, through Norman, or within the City of Norman. Public input and involvement were a large part of this planning process and a Storm Water Master Plan Task Force was created to review ongoing study efforts.

Major problems that the Storm Water Master Plan addresses include:

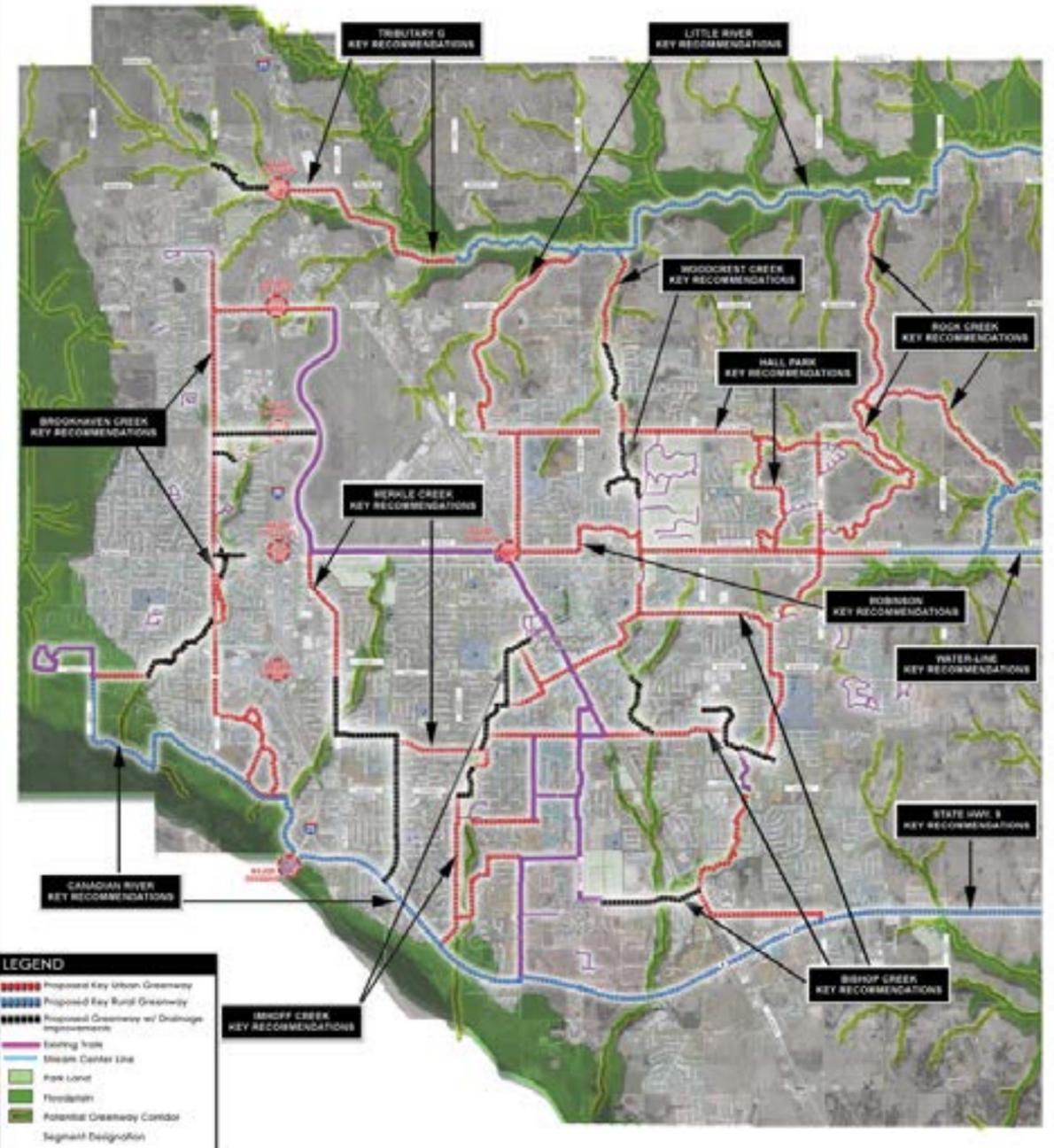
- ▶ Improving and/or protecting stream environmental integrity by using bio-engineering and natural channel design techniques.
- ▶ Preserving the historical character of key Works Progress Administration (WPA) constructed channels found in the upper Imhoff and Bishop Creek watersheds.
- ▶ Improving water quality.
- ▶ Identifying greenway opportunities.

The study that resulted from the Storm Water Master Plan identified fifty-nine problem areas in the City in regards to stream flooding, stream erosion, and local drainage problems. Major problem areas are located along or west of 48th Avenue East. A large majority of the problem areas do not have sufficient drainage easements or right-of-way and as a result a portion of the solution will be to purchase the necessary easement or right-of-way.





NORMAN GREENWAY IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY



Greenways Master Plan

A Greenways Master Plan was developed as a component of the Storm Water Master Plan. Creating drainage and watershed corridors for storm water in a city such as Norman also creates opportunities for trails and greenways. Drainage corridors are often ideal for trails because they create greenways, they are linear, and they connect large portions of the City. It was only natural for the City of Norman to develop a Greenways Master Plan with trail priorities in collaboration with the Storm Water Master Plan.

The greenways identified in the master plan were then evaluated based on their suitability for trails. The suitability looked at:

- ▶ Connectivity
- ▶ Ownership of the property
- ▶ Compatibility with adjacent land uses
- ▶ Environmental and physical characteristics
- ▶ The level of public support for each corridor

High priority trails that are recommended as a result of this plan include:

- ▶ Bishop Creek Greenway
- ▶ Brookhaven Creek Greenway
- ▶ Canadian River Greenway
- ▶ Imhoff Creek Greenway
- ▶ Little River Creek Greenway
- ▶ Merkle Creek Greenway
- ▶ Rock Creek Greenway
- ▶ Tributary G Greenway
- ▶ Woodcrest Greenway





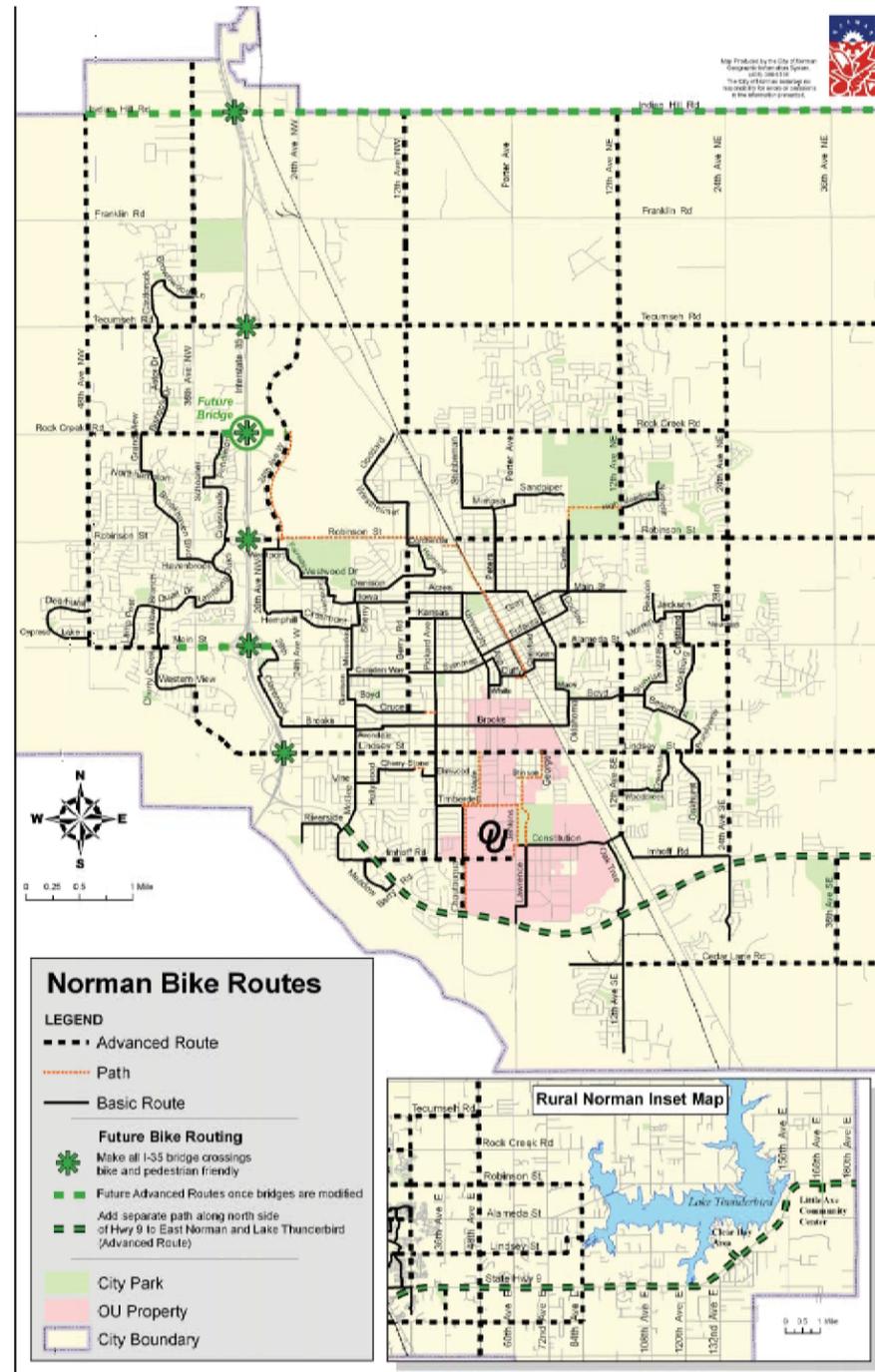
Norman Bicycle Master Plan

The Norman Bicycle Master Plan was adopted in 1996 then updated in 2009. The plan designates bicycle routes throughout the city. The routes are prioritized

into three categories:

- ▶ Basic Routes
- ▶ Advanced Routes
- ▶ Bike Paths

Norman currently has designated shared-road bicycle routes; however there are no striped bicycle lanes on roadways as shown in the picture below.



2009 Bicycle Master Plan Update





Chapter 2

Norman Past and Present



Chapter 2

Norman Past and Present

Norman's Geography

Norman's current size is 189.51 square miles: 177.01 square miles of land and 12.5 square miles of water. Norman is located about 20 miles south of Oklahoma City in Cleveland County. It is the county seat of Cleveland County, and it is the third largest city in the State of Oklahoma. The western portion of the City is mostly prairie lands, while the eastern portion and around Lake Thunderbird is mostly Cross Timbers. Major highways bisecting Norman include: Interstate Highway 35, State Highway 9, U.S. Highway 77, State Highway 77H, and State Highway 74A.

History of Norman

Oklahoma and the area around the City of Norman were long inhabited by Native Americans. The history of how Norman got its name is unlike the naming of most other surrounding towns. In 1870, the United States Land Office decided to survey Oklahoma, which at that time was called the Unassigned Lands, with the intent that the land would one day be settled. The Land Office contracted an engineer to survey the Unassigned Lands. The engineer's name was Abner E. Norman and he became the supervisor of the survey crew for the territory. Abner E. Norman was a young man when he became supervisor and was often the subject of pranks by his crew. One notable prank was

that the crew stripped bark off a tree near their camp and burned "Norman's Camp" into the tree trunk. In 1886, the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway planned for the current site of Norman to be a rail station. The railroad company found the words burned into the tree and named the station Norman. The railroad line was then platted through what is now the City of Norman.

April 22, 1889 was the first day of the Oklahoma Land Run for the Unassigned Lands. The land run started at 12:00 noon, and over 50,000 people were estimated to have participated. There were approximately 2 million acres of land that were available for settlement. The Oklahoma Land Run was made possible due to the Homestead Act of 1862. This Act stated that legal settlers could claim lots up to 160 acres in size, and if the settler lived on and improved the land then the settler could receive the title to the land. Much of Norman and the surrounding area was quickly settled during the Land Run. Norman was later named the county seat of Cleveland County in May of 1890 when the United States Congress passed the Organic Act which established the boundaries of Oklahoma and formed it into a territory.

George W. Steele was the first governor of the Oklahoma Territory. In December of 1890, Steele signed a bill establishing three educational institutions. Norman was chosen as the site for the University of Oklahoma.

"If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom and deprecate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground, they want rain without thunder and lightning."
Frederick Douglass



Historic photos from the Pioneer Library system.





Economy of Norman

When Norman was originally settled after the Land Run in 1889, farming was the largest industry in the area. However, during the Great Depression much of Oklahoma was in drought and farming almost came to a halt. Many of the sharecroppers left Oklahoma hoping for work in California, which became the inspiration for John Steinbeck's classic novel *The Grapes of Wrath*.

Before Oklahoma was even a state, the University of Oklahoma was a major employer and an economic engine for the City of Norman. The National Weather Center has a prominent research center on OU campus, making Norman a major center in meteorological research. The severe weather research center has

several NOAA organizations including the Storm Prediction Center and the National Severe Storms Laboratory.

Employer	# of Employees
University of Oklahoma	11,913
Norman Regional Hospital	2,300
Norman Public Schools	1,460
Johnson Controls	1,100
City of Norman	735
National Weather Center	650
Client Logic	600
U.S.P.S. Center for Employee Development	550
Office Max	500
Griffin Memorial Hospital	440
Moore Norman Technology Center	410
Sysco Food Services of Oklahoma	400
Oklahoma Veterans Center, Norman	360
Hitachi Computer Product, Inc.	260
AT&T	250
Astellas Pharma Technologies	200
Albon	200
Hiland Dairy Foods Company	100

Source: Norman Chamber of Commerce 2009

University North Park is a high end retail district, located in the northern portion of the City, with an Embassy Suites Hotel and the Norman Conference Center. This area has its own TIF district to fund improvements up to 25 years. This retail district, which opened in October 2006, is expected to be a large contributor to the local economy of Norman. Major retail stores include: Super Target, TJ Maxx, Office Depot, Petco and Kohl's.

The ongoing revitalization of downtown will also play a significant role in contributing to the economy.

Today Norman has several research and technology companies such as Johnson Controls, Hitachi Computer Products, and Client Logic. A list of the major employers in Norman can be found in Table 2 - 1.

Norman's Population

Similar to other communities in the central portion of Oklahoma, Norman and Cleveland County have experienced steady growth over the past few decades as shown in Table 2 - 2. Table 2 - 3 illustrates recent growth of the City of Norman with increases ranging from 1.75% to 3.09% per year.

Year	Norman		Cleveland County	
	Population	% of Growth	Population	% of Growth
1970	52,117	-	81,839	-
1980	68,020	30.51%	133,173	62.73%
1990	80,071	17.72%	174,253	30.85%
2000	95,694	19.51%	208,016	19.38%
2007	106,707	11.51%	236,452	13.67%

Source: U.S. Census

Year	Population	% of Growth
2000	95,694	-
2001	97,664	2.06%
2002	99,370	1.75%
2003	102,154	2.80%
2004	105,315	3.09%
2005	107,690	2.26%

Source: Norman Planning Department

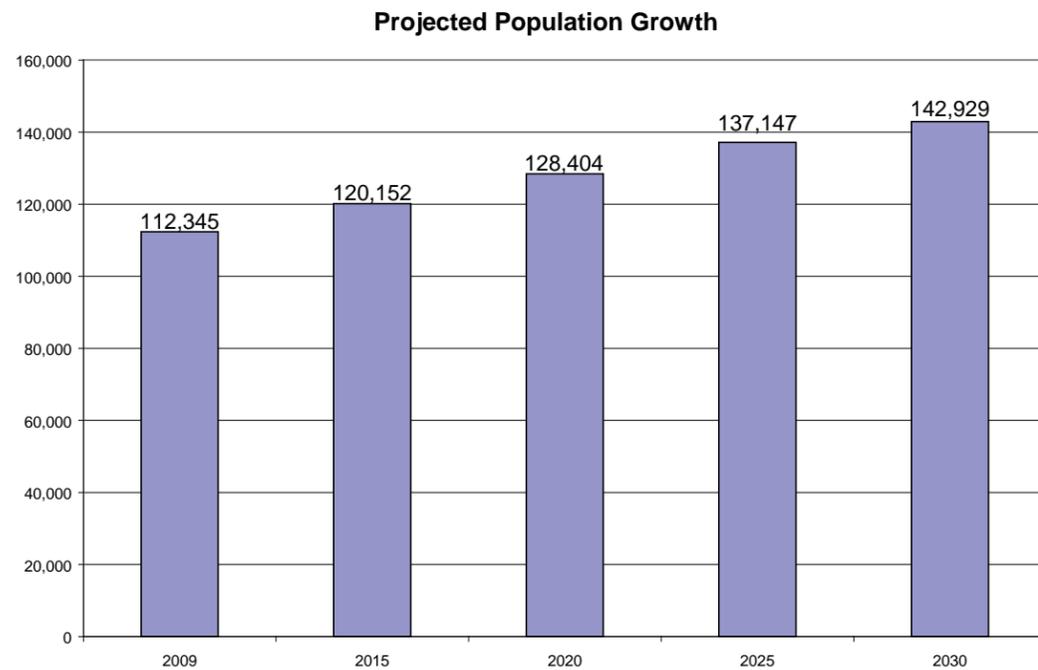




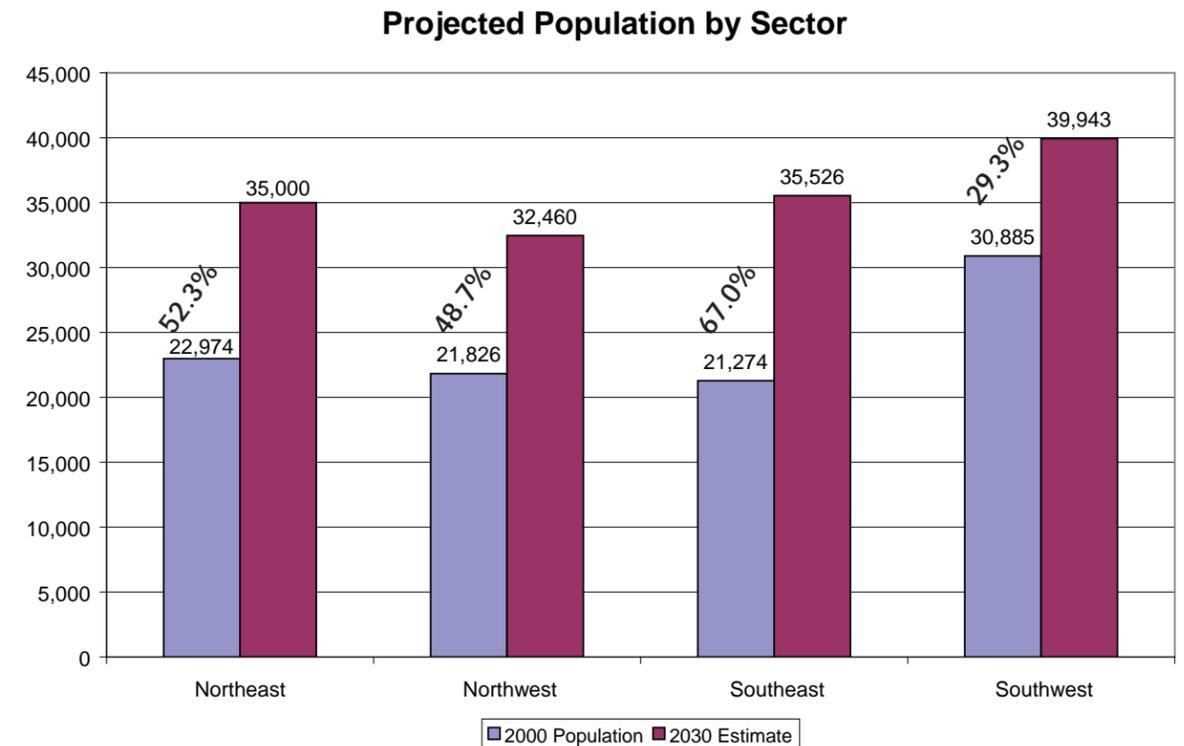
The steady growth that Norman has experienced for the past several decades is expected to continue over the next twenty years. During the lifetime of this master plan, Norman's population will reach over 130,000 residents as shown in Table 2 - 4.

Year	Population	% of Growth
2007	106,707	-
2010	112,208	5.16%
2015	120,152	7.08%
2020	128,404	6.87%
2025	137,147	6.81%

Source: Norman 2025 Land Use and Transportation Plan



Population projections for the year 2030 were provided by the Oklahoma City Area Regional Transportation Study (OCARTS). This data allowed for a population projection by sector of the City. The 2000 census population and the 2030 projected population are shown by the graph below. The southeast sector of Norman is projected to have the most growth by the year 2030 with a 67% increase from the 2000 population. The northeast is projected to have the second highest level of growth, followed by the northwest, and the southwest which is projected to have the least amount of growth. The older neighborhoods in Norman are in the southwest sector and much of this area is already built out.





Demographics of Norman

Demographic characteristics include race, age, income level and educational attainment. The majority of the demographic characteristics were assembled from ESRI Market Profile, a reputable national market research company which supplies GIS databases. ERSI data is derived from U.S. Census information. Most demographic characteristics compare the City of Norman to the Oklahoma City Metropolitan Statistical Area. This comparison provides a clear picture of the demographics of Norman as opposed to its surrounding communities as a whole.

Race - The racial distribution of Norman and OKC MSA is shown below in Table 2 - 5. Norman has a slightly higher percentage of American Indian and Asian or Pacific Islander residents when compared to the OKC MSA, and a slightly lower percentage of people identified as Black and as Hispanic origin of any race when compared to the OKC MSA.

Race	Norman - %	Oklahoma City MSA - %
White	79.1%	73.2%
Black	4.5%	10.6%
American Indian	4.5%	3.9%
Asian or Pacific Islander	4.8%	3.5%
Other	1.8%	4.1%
Two or more races	6.1%	5.6%
Hispanic of any race	6.0%	10.0%

Source: ESRI Market Profile

Age - The age of the residents in Norman and OKC MSA is shown in Table 2 - 6. Not surprisingly, Norman has a significantly higher percentage of people between the ages of 20 to 24 when compared to the OKC MSA. This is a result of the University of Oklahoma being located within the City of Norman. Norman also has fewer senior citizens when compared to the OKC MSA. Only 9.5% of Norman's population is over the age of 65 while the OKC MSA has 11.6% of the population over the age of 65. Norman has only 22.4% of its population between the ages of 45 to 64, whereas the OKC MSA has 25.6% of the population between these ages.

Age	Norman - %	Oklahoma City MSA - %
0-14	16.6%	20.0%
15-19	8.7%	7.0%
20-24	14.7%	7.8%
25-44	28.3%	28.0%
45-64	22.4%	25.6%
65+	9.5%	11.6%

Source: ESRI Market Profile





Income Levels - The median household income, median home value, and per capita income for Norman and OKC MSA are shown in Table 2 - 7. Norman has a similar median household income when compared to OKC MSA. The median home value in Norman is significantly higher, and the per capita income of Norman is slightly higher when compared to OKC MSA.

Households by Income - 16.2% of Norman's population has a household income over \$100,000 where as only 13.8% of the OKC MSA population has a household income over \$100,000. By contrast 27.5% of Norman's population has a household income less than \$24,999 while only 24.0% of the population of the OKC MSA has a household income of \$24,999 or less. Household income is shown in Table 2 - 9.

Employed Population by Industry - The most significant difference in Norman's population and the OKC MSA population in terms of employment is in the service industry. 56.2% of Norman's population works in the service industry whereas only 44.4% of the OKC MSA population works in the service industry. Norman does have a lower manufacturing employment base than the greater OKC MSA. Employment by industry can be shown in Table 2 - 10.

Table 2 - 7 2008 Income Levels		
Type	Norman	Oklahoma City MSA
Median Household Income	\$48,713	\$48,672
Median Home Value	\$142,015	\$117,045
Per Capita Income	\$27,738	\$25,392

Source: ESRI Market Profile

Educational Attainment - As a result of the presence of OU, Norman's population is well educated when compared to the OKC MSA. Twice the number of people in Norman have a Graduate or Professional Degree when compared to the OKC MSA. There is also a significantly higher amount of people in Norman who have a Bachelor's Degree, 24.9%, when compared to OKC MSA with 17.6%. Educational attainment is shown in Table 2 - 8.

Table 2 - 9 2008 Households by Income		
Income	Norman	Oklahoma City MSA
< \$15,000	16.1%	12.3%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	11.4%	11.7%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	10.3%	11.0%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	13.3%	16.2%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	18.8%	20.6%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	13.9%	14.4%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	9.8%	8.7%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	3.2%	2.5%
\$200,000 +	3.2%	2.6%

Source: ESRI Market Profile

Table 2 - 10 2008 Employed Population by Industry		
Industry	Norman	Oklahoma City MSA
Agriculture/mining	2.2%	3.3%
Construction	5.7%	7.6%
Manufacturing	4.8%	7.3%
Wholesale trade	2.0%	3.4%
Retail trade	10.9%	10.9%
Transportation/utilities	3.1%	3.9%
Information	2.9%	2.8%
Finance/insurance/real estate	5.5%	7.9%
Services	56.2%	44.4%
Public administration	6.7%	8.4%

Source: ESRI Market Profile

Table 2 - 8 2008 Population by Educational Attainment		
	Norman	Oklahoma City MSA
Less than high school	8.0%	13.8%
High school graduate	20.1%	28.9%
Some college, no degree	23.5%	24.9%
Associate Degree	6.4%	6.3%
Bachelor's Degree	24.9%	17.6%
Graduate/Professional Degree	17.2%	8.6%

Source: ESRI Market Profile





Employed Population by Occupation - Norman has a significant percentage of its population working in a professional occupation, 30.1%. However only 20.7% of the OKC MSA population works in a professional occupation. The employment by occupation is shown in Table 2 - 11.

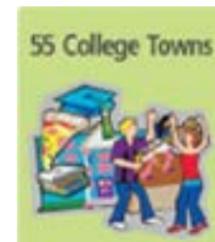
Occupation	Norman	Oklahoma City MSA
Management/business/financial	13.6%	13.8%
Professional	30.1%	20.7%
Sales	12.1%	12.0%
Administrative support	12.6%	14.8%
Services	17.0%	16.0%
Farming/forestry/fishing	0.1%	0.3%
Construction/extraction	4.4%	6.7%
Installation/maintenance/repair	3.6%	4.7%
Production	3.2%	5.6%
Transportation/material moving	3.3%	5.5%

Source: ESRI Market Profile

ESRI Community Tapestry Segments

The ESRI data system has developed 65 different marketing segments of the population which collectively are called the community tapestry. In a community tapestry, portions of the population are categorized based on different demographic factors such as age, size of family, household income, education attainment, etc. From this, ESRI is able to make generalizations about each tapestry in terms of the type of recreation they enjoy, the type of car they would likely purchase, the type of vacations they would like to take, and what they enjoy doing in their leisure time.

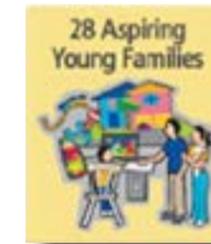
There are five prominent tapestries that occur within the City of Norman. These are "College Towns" which is 16.1% of the population, "Aspiring Young Families" which is 12.5% of the population, "Dorms to Diplomas" which is 6.9% of the population, "Old and Newcomers" which is 6.5% of the population, and "Milk and Cookies" which is 6.0% of the population.



16.1%

College Towns - The average age of this group is 24.4 years old and most residents either live in single-person or shared households. This tapestry segment includes both students at colleges or universities and residents who teach or do research at the college or university. This tapestry is very well educated with over 40% of the residents over the age of 25 having a bachelor's or graduate degree. 52% of those who are employed in this tapestry only work part-time, often at jobs involving educational services, health care, and food preparation. One out of every seven residents in this tapestry lives in an on-campus dorm. Those who live off-campus usually live in low-income rental apartments. These residents are new to living on their own so they purchase only a few appliances such as a microwave oven and a toaster. They eat out at fast-food restaurants or buy ready-made prepared meals. These residents attend music concerts, college basketball and football games, play pool and go to the movies. Their recreational activities are very casual and they participate in nearly every outdoor sport and athletic activity.

Aspiring Young Families - This group of the community tapestry is



12.5%

young, startup families. There is a mix of ethnic groups, as well as married couples with children, married couples without children, and single parents with children. The median age is 30.5 years old. The median household income for this tapestry is \$50,000 and approximately 60% of the employed residents have professional, management, sales, or office and administrative support positions. Over 85% of this tapestry has a high school diploma and 22% have a bachelor's or graduate degree. The population of this tapestry lives in a mix of apartments, single-family houses, and startup townhomes. There is a mix of both renters and home owners. Much of their discretionary income is spent on their children and on their home. This population likes to vacation at theme parks. In their leisure time they like to dine out, go dancing, go to the movies and attend professional/college football games. Other recreational activities this tapestry enjoys include fishing, weight lifting, and playing basketball.

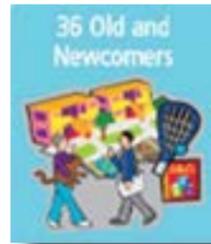
Dorms to Diplomas - This tapestry is made up of college students with a median age of 21.8 years. Approximately 42% of these residents live in shared housing with one or more roommates; in addition 43% live in on-campus dorms. The ethnic diversity is low with 71% being white and 11% of the population is Asian. Almost 75% of the residents work part-time in low-paying service jobs, and many are employed by the educational institutions they attend. Almost all of this tapestry owns a personal computer to research school assignments, find employment, make travel plans, and keep in touch with family. Most students also own cell phones and iPods. They exercise by participating in college sports, walking on campus, and working out at on-campus gyms. Their leisure activities include attending concerts, going dancing, going to movies, visiting theme parks, playing pool, and spending time with friends while watching a sports game or a movie.

Old and Newcomers - This segment consists of neighborhoods that are in transition and are populated by renters who are starting their careers or people who are retired. The age of this population is

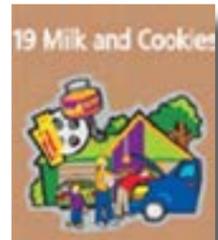




either 20s or 75 and older. There are more single person and shared households than families. The majority of residents are white. This group of the population usually drives compact cars and has life insurance policies as well as renter's insurance and medical insurance. This population enjoys reading fiction, non-fiction, newspapers and magazines. They also enjoy going to the movies, watching television and listening to the radio. They play sports such as racquetball, golf, and walk or jog. Other activities include going to the zoo and cooking.



6.5%



6.0%

Milk and Cookies - This tapestry is represented by young, affluent married couples who either have young children or are just starting a family. The median age is 34.2 years and the median household income is \$63,574. Approximately 58% have a bachelor's degree, graduate degree or at least have attended college. The families in this population are usually dual income families so they have at least two vehicles. They frequently buy fast food from Little Caesars, Whataburger, or Sonic. They enjoy chess, backgammon, football and are very interested in basketball by playing pick up games, attending professional games, and watching games on television. Much of their leisure time is spent working on their lawns, painting the inside of their homes or performing minor maintenance on their vehicles.

ESRI Entertainment and Recreation Expenditures Estimate

The ESRI Entertainment and Recreation Expenditures report analyzes what a given segment of the population spends their money on in terms of different goods and services. Goods and services in this report include a variety of entertainment and recreational activities. The items that the average household in Norman purchased, as well as the total amount spent on these items by all of Norman residents, are shown in more detail in Table 2 - 12 for the year 2008.

Table 2 - 12 2008 Entertainment and Recreation Expenditures for Norman		
Entertainment or Recreation Activity	Average Amount Spent per Household	Total Amount Spent by Norman Pop.
Community antenna or cable TV	\$659.19	\$28,943,632
Pets	\$393.96	\$17,297,994
Recreational vehicles and fees	\$324.64	\$14,254,439
Televisions	\$272.16	\$11,949,931
Reading	\$244.34	\$10,728,471
Sound equipment	\$197.89	\$8,688,883
Sports/recreation/exercise equipment	\$183.22	\$8,044,683
Membership fees for clubs	\$146.42	\$6,428,885
Admission to movie/theatre/opera/ballet	\$141.53	\$6,214,302
Toys and games	\$137.18	\$6,023,465
Photo equipment and supplies	\$112.01	\$4,918,346
Fees for recreational lessons	\$104.64	\$4,594,657
Fees for participant sports excluding trips	\$98.65	\$4,331,665
Video cassettes and DVDs	\$66.13	\$2,903,643
Admission to sporting events excluding trips	\$54.43	\$2,390,092
Rental of video cassettes and DVDs	\$52.08	\$2,286,801
Video game hardware and software	\$35.09	\$1,540,636
VCRs, video cameras, and DVD players	\$30.18	\$1,325,178
Rental and repair of TV/radior/sound equip.	\$5.87	\$257,670
Satellite dishes	\$0.96	\$41,936
Streaming/download video	\$0.74	\$32,505
Dating services	\$0.52	\$22,798

Source: ESRI Retail Goods and Services Expenditures





Sports and Leisure Market Potential

The Sports and Leisure Market Potential Report done by ESRI measures the probable demand for a product or service in a defined geographic area, in this case the City of Norman. A list of over 100 recreational activities was generated, and a Market Potential Index was measured. The Market Potential Index (MPI) measures the likelihood that adult households in Norman will exhibit certain consumer behaviors when compared to the U.S. national average. The national average MPI is 100. Therefore, if the City of Norman has an MPI much higher than 100, the adult residents of the City are much more likely to participate in or attend those activities. If the City of Norman has an MPI lower than 100, then the adult residents of Norman are not likely to participate or attend those activities. Popular recreational activities in Norman, as determined by the MPI, include participating in football, basketball, tennis, jogging / running, volleyball, roller blading, and soccer. Because these activities have a high MPI, many more adults in Norman participate in them when compared to the national average. These market sectors may have growth potential in Norman.

Sport	MPI ⁽¹⁾
Participated in football	156
Participated in basketball	145
Participated in tennis	142
Participated in jogging/running	138
Participated in volleyball	134
Participated in roller blading	132
Participated in soccer	131
Participated in mountain biking	128
Participated in softball	128
Participated in road bicycling	122

Source: ESRI Sports and Leisure Market Potential

Sport or Activity	MPI ⁽¹⁾
Attend football game (college)	148
Attend basketball game (college)	140
Attend rock music performance	134
Attend movies once per month	125
Attend movies once per week	124
Attend adult education course	123
Attend soccer game	121
Attend classical music/opera performance	119
Attend movies 2-3 per month	119
Attend live theater performance	117

Source: ESRI Sports and Leisure Market Potential

Activity	MPI ⁽¹⁾
Participated in karaoke	163
Played video games	144
Played billiards/pool	130
Participated in Frisbee	129
Participated in Yoga	129
Participated in ice skating	126
Went dancing	126
Participated in weight lifting	125
Participated in back packing/hiking	124
Participated in water skiing	124

Source: ESRI Sports and Leisure Market Potential

Sport or Activity	MPI ⁽¹⁾
<\$250 on high end sports equipment	146
Bought 4 to 6 hardcover books	127
Went to the zoo	115
Went to a museum	114
Gambled at a casino 6+ times	112
Went to Six Flags	109
Bought a sound game for a child	107
Dined out 2+ times per week	107
Bought educational toy for child	104

Source: ESRI Sports and Leisure Market Potential

⁽¹⁾ National Market Potential Index (MPI) is 100





Schools in Norman

Norman Public Schools is the primary provider of education to the children of Norman. A list of their campuses and the number of students is shown in Table 2 - 17 to the right. There are a total of 15 elementary schools (14 of the 15 are named after U.S. presidents), four middle schools (all named after U.S. authors), and two high schools.

There are 5 private schools within Norman: All Saints Catholic School for grades Pre-K to 8, Blue Eagle Christian Academy for grades Pre-K to 12, Community Christian School for grades Pre-K to 12, Robinson St. Christian School for grades K to 12, and Trinity Lutheran Kind Preschool for grades Pre-K to 4.

Norman is also the home of the University of Oklahoma, a premier institution of higher learning with over 30,000 students enrolled each year.

Outdoor recreation features associated with each Norman Public School campus are shown in Table 2 - 17. These facilities are considered in the overall planning process since they may supplement recreation features offered by the City of Norman.

Table 2 - 17 Norman Public Schools		
School Name	2008-2009 Enrollment	Applicable Recreation Features
Adams Elementary	457	backstop, 2 playgrounds, 2 basketball courts, 4-square courts
Cleveland Elementary	467	2 backstops, soccer practice field, 2 playgrounds, 2 basketball courts, 4-square courts
Eisenhower Elementary	449	backstop, playground, 4 basketball courts, 4-square courts
Jackson Elementary	423	backstop, soccer practice field, playground, basketball court
Jefferson Elementary	356	playground, 4-square courts
Kennedy Elementary	414	2 playgrounds
Lakeview Elementary	271	playground, basketball court, 4-square court
Lincoln Elementary	323	3 playgrounds, backstop, soccer practice field, basketball court, 4-square courts
Madison Elementary	513	2 playgrounds, backstop, 2 basketball courts, 4-square courts, hopscotch
McKinley Elementary	309	backstop, soccer practice field, 2 basketball courts, 4-square courts, 1 playground
Monroe Elementary	395	backstop, 3 playgrounds, 2 basketball courts, 4-square courts
Roosevelt Elementary	477	backstop, soccer practice field, 3 playgrounds, 4-square courts
Truman Elementary	705	backstop, practice soccer field, playground, basketball court, 4-square courts
Washington Elementary	487	2 playgrounds, 2 basketball courts, 4-square courts backstop, soccer practice field
Wilson Elementary	237	backstop, practice soccer field, 3 playgrounds, 4-square courts
Alcott Middle School	651	football field, baseball field, 3 basketball courts
Irving Middle School	632	City-owned recreation center, 4 tennis courts, baseball field, softball field, football field
Longfellow Middle School	605	baseball field, 2 basketball courts
Whittier Middle School	886	City-owned recreation center, baseball field, 4 tennis courts
Norman High School	1,755	baseball field, track, football field, 4 tennis courts
Norman North High School	2,122	baseball field, track, football field, softball field, 4 tennis courts

Source: Yahoo! Real Estate School Information





Key National Trends in Recreation

The rate of change in the world and United States is accelerating, and many of these trends are having a direct impact on recreation. These trends include:

- ▶ **Instead of having more leisure time, the world's increasingly competitive marketplace is forcing many to work harder to keep up.** As a result, we have less leisure time, and fewer opportunities to enjoy recreational activities. We, therefore, tend to seek structured activities with a specific goal, rather than simple unstructured activities such as going for a spontaneous walk.
- ▶ **We have many more leisure time choices.** Greatly increased at-home leisure opportunities are available today, such as hundreds of channels of television, sophisticated computer games and the internet.
- ▶ **Safety is a great concern to parents.** Many parents do not allow their children to go to area parks unattended. In many places the use of neighborhood parks has gone down.
- ▶ **We live in an era of instant gratification.** We expect to have high quality recreation, and to be given activities that we like. We have many leisure time activities and outlets, and can pick and choose what we want to do. Cities must be willing to provide a much broader menu of recreation activities, but must draw the line if those activities become too costly.
- ▶ **Through the media and the internet, we are exposed to the best from around the world.** Because of this, we tend to expect our facilities and activities to be of the highest quality possible.
- ▶ **Concern over the health of our population is rapidly growing.** Obesity is now recognized as a nationwide problem. Oklahoma tied for 8th as the most obese state nationally in 2008 and also had the 5th worst rate of physical inactivity. Funding to reduce obesity rates by increasing outdoor activities may be more readily available in the near future. It may also be a source of grants for parks and recreation programs and facilities.
- ▶ **New revenue sources for public funding are difficult to come by.** The federal surpluses briefly experienced at the turn of the century are now a thing of the past, and deficit spending is probable for the next decade. As a result, less help can be expected from the federal government, and even popular grant programs such as enhancement funds for trails and beautification may not be readily available.

Baby Boomer Trends

It is projected that there are 77 million Americans born between the years of 1946 and 1964. The Baby Boomer generation comprises one-third of the total U.S. population. With such a significant portion of the population entering into the retirement age, they are redefining what it means to grow old. Many Baby Boomers are opting not to retire at a traditional retirement age. Because of their dedication to hard work and youthfulness, this population is expected to stay in the work force longer because they take pleasure in being challenged and engaged. According to Packaged Facts, a demographic marketing research firm, trends that are beginning to take off because of the Baby Boomers include:

- ▶ Prevention-centered healthcare to keep aging bodies disease free.
- ▶ Anti-aging products and services that will keep mature adults looking as young as they view themselves to be.
- ▶ Media and internet technology to facilitate family and social ties, recreation and lifelong learning.
- ▶ Innovation in housing that allows homeowners to age in place.
- ▶ Increasing entrepreneurial activity among those who have retired, along with flexible work schedules that allow for equal work and leisure time.
- ▶ Growing diversity in travel and leisure options, especially with regard to volunteer and eco-friendly opportunities.

High School Sports Trends

The National Federation of State High School Associations reported in September 2008 that participation in high school sports had increased for the nineteenth year in a row. In fact, the 2007-2008 school year had the highest level of sports participation ever recorded with 58% of students enrolled in high school participating in sports. The State of Texas had the highest number of sports participants, followed by California, New York, Ohio, Illinois, Michigan, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Minnesota, and Florida as the top 10 states with regards to participation.

The most popular sports for high school girls are (in order of most participants):

- ▶ Basketball
- ▶ Track and field
- ▶ Volleyball
- ▶ Fast pitch softball
- ▶ Soccer
- ▶ Cross country
- ▶ Tennis
- ▶ Swimming and diving
- ▶ Competitive Spirit Squad
- ▶ Golf

The most popular sports for high school boys are (in order of most participants):

- ▶ Football
- ▶ Basketball
- ▶ Track and field
- ▶ Baseball
- ▶ Soccer
- ▶ Wrestling
- ▶ Cross country
- ▶ Golf
- ▶ Tennis
- ▶ Swimming and diving





Fitness Trends

Americans want to get in shape. Programs such as strength training, conditioning, and aerobics are gaining in popularity. The Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association performs annual surveys and marketing studies to analyze what activities and sports Americans are participating in, and whether or not interest has increased in those activities. In 2008, the most popular sports and fitness activities ranked by highest number of participants were:

- ▶ Exercise walking
- ▶ Swimming
- ▶ Exercising with equipment
- ▶ Bowling
- ▶ Camping
- ▶ Bicycle riding
- ▶ Fishing
- ▶ Workout at a club
- ▶ Hiking
- ▶ Weight lifting
- ▶ Aerobic exercising
- ▶ Running/jogging

The top 10 sports and fitness activities that had the highest growth rate from the year 2007 to 2008 were:

- ▶ Running/jogging 18.2% increase
- ▶ Yoga 17.1% increase
- ▶ Snowboarding 15.6% increase
- ▶ Soccer 12.5% increase
- ▶ Bicycle riding 11.4% increase
- ▶ Hiking 10.5% increase
- ▶ Mountain biking (off road) 9.6% increase
- ▶ Exercising with equipment 9.2% increase
- ▶ Baseball 8.7% increase
- ▶ Exercise walking 7.6% increase

Sports Equipment Sales Trends

With an increased desire to get into shape, people are spending more money than ever on equipment for sports and activities. The Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association reported in 2007 that the sports industry is nearly a \$70 billion business. This includes all the apparel, footwear, and equipment people buy for their desired sports activity. The three activities in 2007 that had the largest statistical gain in spending were martial arts with a 12.1% increase, tennis with a 6.5% increase, and boxing with a 5.0% increase in the necessary equipment. The activities that were expected to have high levels of sales growth in 2008 are:

- ▶ Yoga / Pilates
- ▶ Fitness walking
- ▶ Lacrosse
- ▶ Running
- ▶ Strength training

The Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association identified issues that affected industry sales. These issues included:

- ▶ Older Americans are buying and using fitness equipment.
- ▶ From 1990 to 2007, the number of boys on high school varsity teams rose 27%, while the number of girls on high school varsity teams rose 60%.
- ▶ Despite a 1% drop in sales, retail sales of sports licensed products with Alma Maters remained very strong at \$13.7 billion in 2007, according to estimates by The Licensing Letter.
- ▶ The women's market is biggest in sports apparel with 42% of all spending being for women's items.
- ▶ Nearly one-third of all spending on athletic footwear is by those ages 13-24, who also pay the highest average retail price for athletic footwear.
- ▶ Free weights are the most common form of fitness equipment in the home, while people spend more on treadmills.
- ▶ There are 44.1 million Americans who are members of health clubs, which is 21% more than there were in 2000.

Extreme Sports Trends

The Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association also analyzed the growth in extreme sports. Most extreme sports have been growing steadily in participation since 2000. The most popular of these sports in terms of participation in 2007 were:

- ▶ Inline skating - nearly 45% of all inline skaters participate 13 days or more a year.
- ▶ Skateboarding - more than 3.8 million skateboarders participate 25+ days a year.
- ▶ Mountain biking - overall participation grew 2% in one month.
- ▶ Snowboarding - this is the second most popular winter sport behind Alpine skiing.
- ▶ Paintball - overall participation has grown by more than 50% since 2000.
- ▶ Cardio kickboxing - more than 60% of participants are casual, participating less than 50 days per year.
- ▶ Climbing (indoor, sport, boulder) - popular on cruise ships, at spas, and in many homes.
- ▶ Trail running - total participation has been steady since 2000.
- ▶ Ultimate Frisbee - in 2007, it had more participants nationwide than lacrosse, wrestling, beach volleyball, fast-pitch softball, rugby, field hockey, ice hockey or roller hockey.
- ▶ Wakeboarding - participation is affected by rising fuel costs.
- ▶ Mountain / rock climbing - overall participation grew by 30% from 2006 to 2007.
- ▶ BMX bicycling - more than 60% of these participants engage in the sport 13+ days per year.
- ▶ Roller hockey - one of its biggest challenges is getting access to proper venues.
- ▶ Boardsailing / windsurfing - it is dependent upon weather as this sport needs wind and water in order to participate.





Participation State-by-State Index

The National Sporting Goods Association conducted a state-by-state participation index in 2006. The index included 33 different sports where the total participation, frequency of participation and total days spent participating were calculated. The index was determined by dividing a state's percentage of participants by its percentage of the U.S. population. The national average of the index was set at 100. The five highest ranked sports for each state were then calculated.

For Oklahoma, the top five are:

- ▶ Tennis index of 338
- ▶ Hunting with a bow and arrow index of 234
- ▶ Baseball index of 157
- ▶ Hunting with firearms index of 156
- ▶ Aerobic exercising index of 149

This means that residents of Oklahoma are 3.38 times more likely to play tennis as opposed to the national average and 2.34 times more likely to hunt with a bow and arrow as opposed to the national average.

For comparison purposes, the highest ranked sports for each of the states that surround Oklahoma are:

- ▶ Arkansas, hunting with a bow and arrow index of 600
- ▶ Colorado, skiing-alpine index of 834
- ▶ Kansas, baseball index of 236
- ▶ Missouri, billiards/pool index of 212
- ▶ New Mexico, volleyball index of 353
- ▶ Texas, in-line roller skating index of 142



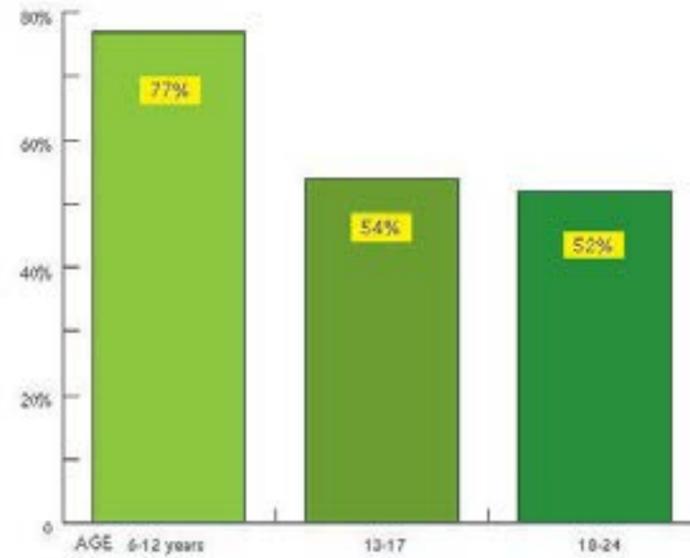


National Outdoor Participation Trends

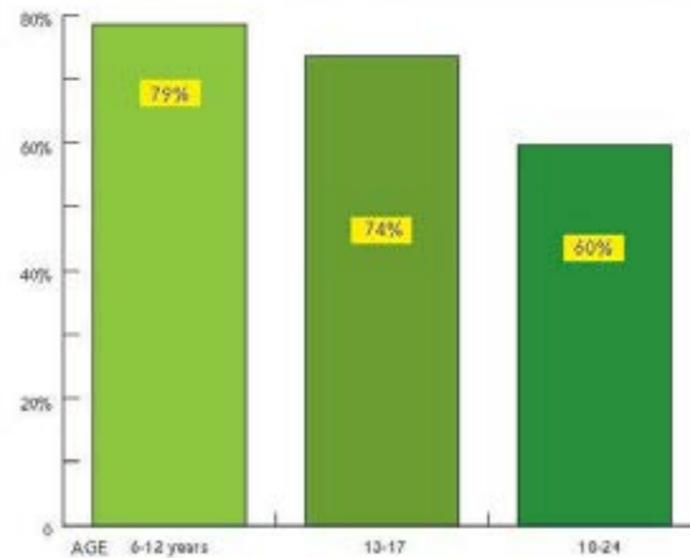
The Outdoor Industry Foundation conducted a nationwide survey in 2007, and a follow up to the survey in 2008, to determine in which outdoor activities that Americans (ages six and older) were participating. The total surveyed panel included more than one million households. The survey identified "gateway" activities as bicycling, camping, fishing, hiking and running/jogging. By introducing people to these outdoor activities, they are more likely to participate in other activities. For example, a day hiker is more likely to later become a backpacker as opposed to someone who does not hike. Significant findings from the survey include:

- ▶ The drop-off in outdoor participation between the child age group of 6 to 12 and the teenage group of 13 to 17 is higher among girls than boys (see bar graph to the right).
- ▶ Outdoor participation among boys drops significantly between teenage and young adulthood ages (see bar graph to the right).
- ▶ Nearly half of those who participate in outdoor activities did so 30 times or less in 2006.
- ▶ Only 26% of Americans participate in outdoor activities two times a week or more.
- ▶ 50% of outdoor activity participants consider those activities their main source of exercise.
- ▶ 76% of youth boys and 69% of youth girls will try outdoor activities.
- ▶ As people age, they become more focused on their specific favorite outdoor activities, leading to participation in a fewer variety of activities.
- ▶ As people age, they participate in more indoor fitness activities and fewer outdoor activities and team ball sports.
- ▶ Participation in indoor fitness and outdoor activities are roughly equal with young adults ages 18 to 24 (see line graph to the far right).
- ▶ Youth and young adults ages 6 to 24 are more than twice as likely to bicycle if they also skateboard.
- ▶ Adults age 24 and older are three times more likely to backpack if they also jog.
- ▶ Encouraging any form of outdoor activity can increase the likelihood of participating in other forms of outdoor activities in the future.

Participation* in Outdoor Activities: Female Youth

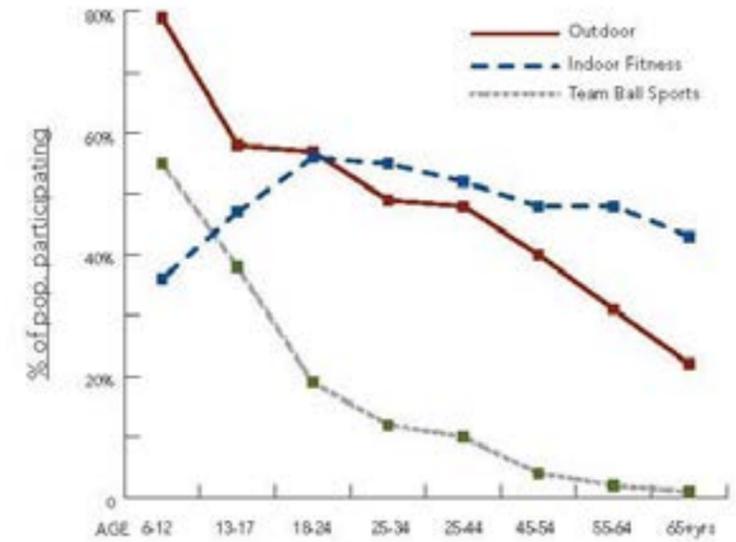


Participation* in Outdoor Activities: Male Youth

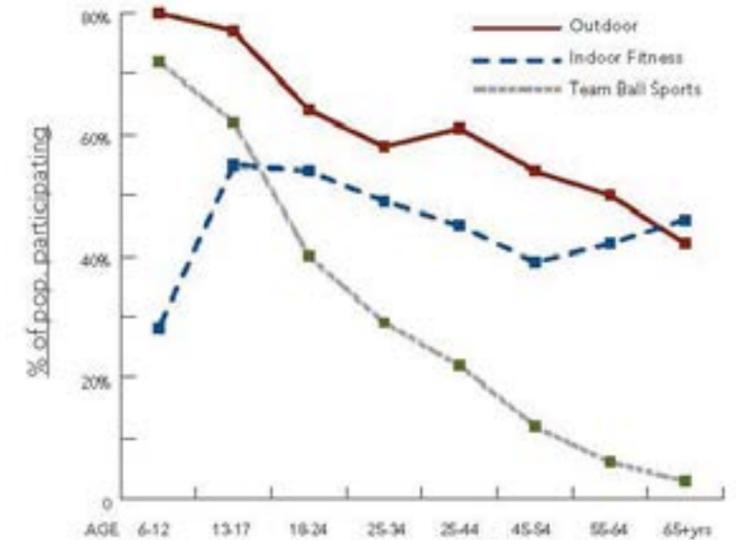


*Participation is defined as taking part in one of 35 outdoor activities at least once in 2006. Outdoor Industry Foundation, 2008

Outdoor, Indoor Fitness and Team Ballsports Activities: Life Cycle of Female Participation*



Outdoor, Indoor Fitness and Team Ballsports: Life Cycle of Male Participation*



*Participation is defined as taking part in one activity within the activity category at least once in 2005 and/or 2006. Details on activity categories can be found on page 16/17. Outdoor Industry Foundation, 2008

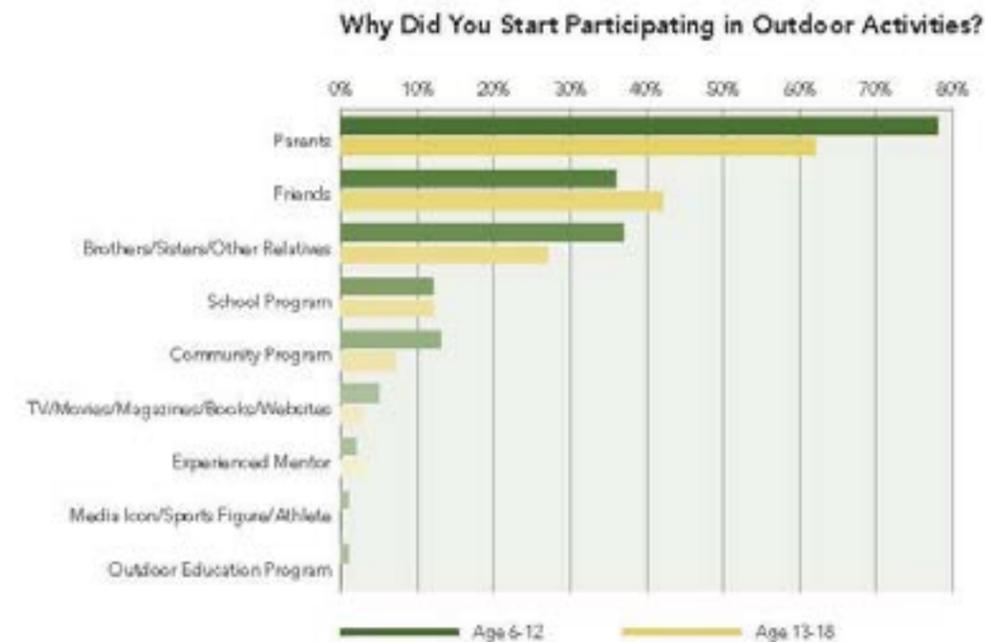




National Outdoor Participation Trends in Youth

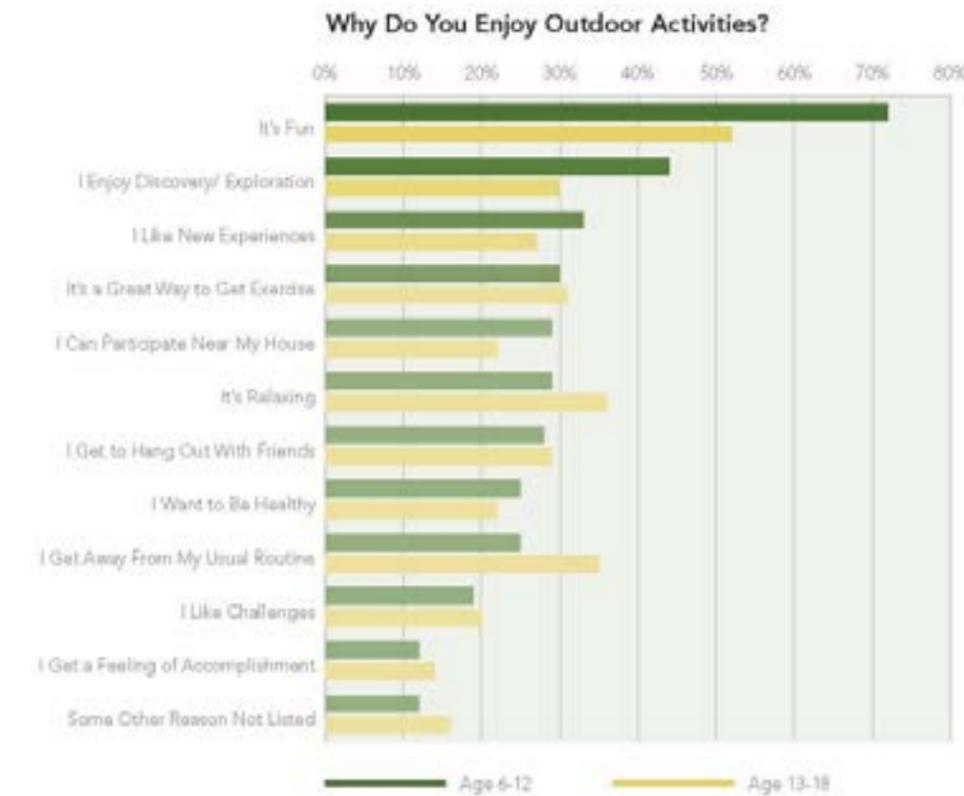
The 2008 follow up survey that was done by the Outdoor Industry Foundation included several direct questions aimed at youth and their participation in outdoor activities. For the purpose of the survey, the youth were divided into two groups: youth ages 6 to 12 and teens ages 13 to 18.

The first question asked who introduces them to their outdoor activities. Parents were the number one response with both age groups. This indicates that parents have a direct impact on whether or not a child is active outdoors. This is shown in the bar graph below.



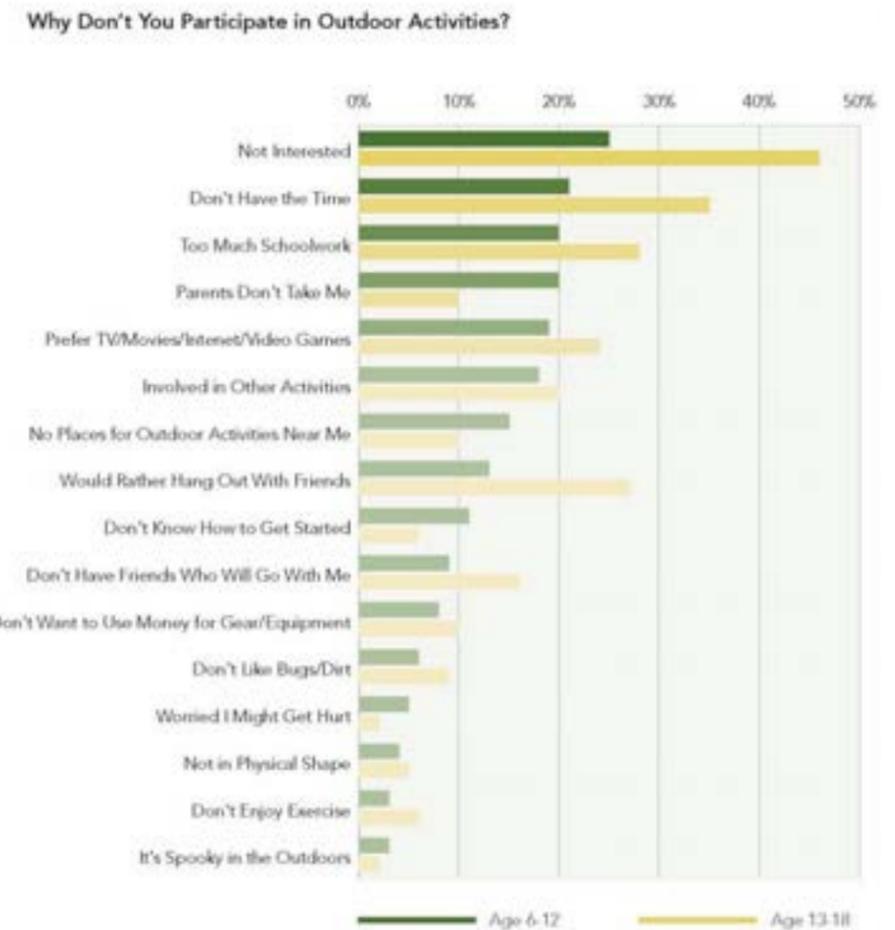
Outdoor Industry Foundation, 2008

Second, the youth were asked why it is that they enjoy those outdoor activities. For both age groups, "it's fun" is the number one response. For the youth ages 6 to 12, the second highest response was "I enjoy discovery/exploration." For teens ages 13 to 18, the second highest response was "it's relaxing" followed by "I get away from my usual routine." These responses are shown in the bar graph below.



Outdoor Industry Foundation, 2008

For the youth who cited that they do not participate in outdoor activities, they were asked what was their reason for non-participation. The most common reason for both age groups was that they were not interested. The second reason was that they "don't have the time." These results are shown in the bar graph below.



Outdoor Industry Foundation, 2008





U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife Associated Recreation

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service conducts a survey every five years having begun in 1955 to determine the national and statewide participation in fishing, hunting and wildlife associated recreation activities. Wildlife associated activities include observing, photographing and feeding wildlife. For this master plan, the previous three surveys from 1996, 2001, and 2006, were compared. A summary of the results from the three surveys is shown in Table 2 - 18.

Anglers

- ▶ Over the past ten years, the number of people who participate in fishing has dropped, as well as the total number of days spent fishing.
- ▶ The average amount of money spent per angler on equipment and trip-related expenditures has significantly increased over the past decade from \$525 in 1996 to \$819 in 2006.

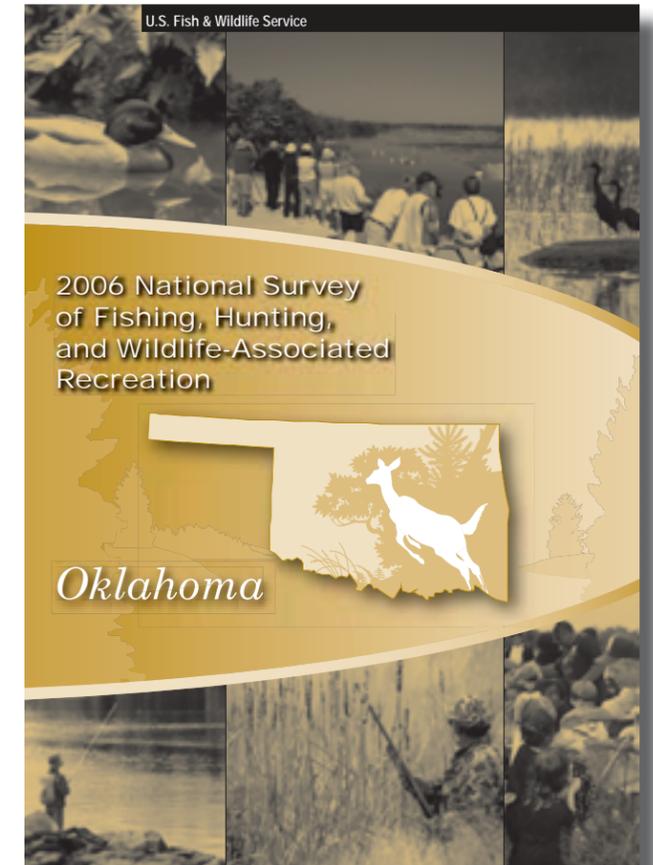
Hunters

- ▶ Similar to fishing, the number of hunters has decreased over the past ten years.
- ▶ The total number of days spent hunting has also decreased; however, the average number of days per hunter has slightly increased.
- ▶ Again, the average amount of money spent on expenditures per hunter has increased overall from 1996 to 2006.

Wildlife Participants

- ▶ The total number of people who participate in wildlife recreation activities has increased overall. The number of both near home wildlife trips and away from home wildlife trips have also increased. This demonstrates a desire for both wildlife areas close to home for day trips and significant wildlife destinations worth traveling.
- ▶ Similar to fishing and hunting, the average amount of money spent per participant on expenditures for wildlife recreation has increased from \$208 in 1996 to \$289 in 2006.

	1996	2001	2006
Anglers	924,000	774,000	611,000
Days spent fishing	14,674,000	12,741,000	10,580,000
Avg. days per angler	16	16	17
Total expenditures	\$490,767,000	\$476,019,000	\$501,786,000
Avg. per Angler	\$525	\$609	\$819
Hunters	297,000	261,000	251,000
Days spent hunting	5,605,000	5,642,000	5,534,000
Avg. days per hunter	19	22	22
Total expenditures	\$426,803,000	\$284,071,000	\$476,657,000
Avg. per Hunter	\$1,400	\$1,086	\$1,746
Wildlife Participants	947,000	1,131,000	1,110,000
Away-from-home	347,000	403,000	372,000
Around-the-home	818,000	997,000	976,000
Total expenditures	\$201,797,000	\$193,248,000	\$328,660,000
Avg. per Participant	\$208	\$171	\$289





Chapter 3

The Current State of Parks in Norman



Chapter 3

The Current State of Parks in Norman

Park - an area of land, usually in a large natural state, for the enjoyment of the public, having facilities for rest and recreation, often owned, set apart, and managed by a city, state, or nation.



Introduction

Norman has an established network of both neighborhood and larger community park facilities. These parks are well placed within the neighborhoods that they serve and are well maintained. A key part of the park planning process is to understand what parks, recreation buildings, trails and open space facilities are currently available. The process also evaluates the current condition of those facilities so as to assess whether or not they are addressing the current park and open space needs of the city. This serves as the foundation for the needs assessment for new or improved recreational facilities.

Components of the Review of Existing Parks

This review of existing parks looks at several aspects of each park in the Norman park and open space system. These include:

- ▶ **Classification:** What is the purpose of a given park? Is it intended to serve a local neighborhood around it, giving children and young adults a place to play? Is it intended to serve a much larger population, providing fields for organized league play? This determines whether a park should be classified as a neighborhood park, a community park, a special purpose park, or a linkage park. Key issues include:
 - ▶ **Location:** Where is the park located in relation to the population that it serves? Is it accessible?
 - ▶ **Service Area:** What are the limits of the area served by each park? Are there any major thoroughfares or physical features that create barriers to accessing the park?
 - ▶ **Size of the Park:** How big is the park? Is it large enough to adequately accomplish its intended purpose?

- ▶ **Facilities in each Park:** What does the park contain? Are the facilities appropriate for the type of park?
- ▶ **Layout:** Is the arrangement of facilities in each park appropriate?
- ▶ **Condition of the Park:** What is the general condition of the facilities in each park?
- ▶ **Special Considerations:** Does the park provide facilities for the physically challenged that meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act?

This document notes general condition, but does not provide an in-depth safety or conditional review of equipment, buildings or accessibility. These specific assessments should continue to be conducted by staff on a periodic basis.

Park Classification

There are three broad categories of parks identified by national and state guidelines. These are:

- ▶ Close-to-Home Parks (such as neighborhood and community parks)
- ▶ Regional Parks (such as parks around Lake Thunderbird)
- ▶ Unique Parks (such as special use and linear parks. These can also fall into the category of a close-to-home park or a regional park)

Close-to-home parks are a key category and should be one of the major focal points of neighborhoods in Norman. Close-to-home parks address day to day facilities for all ages and activities, and are usually within walking or driving distance from where we live. The four close-to-home park types that exist in Norman are:

- ▶ Neighborhood parks
- ▶ Community parks
- ▶ Special use parks
- ▶ Linear parks

Local Close-to-Home Parks - Located within the community served by the facility, which includes pocket parks, neighborhood parks, and community parks.



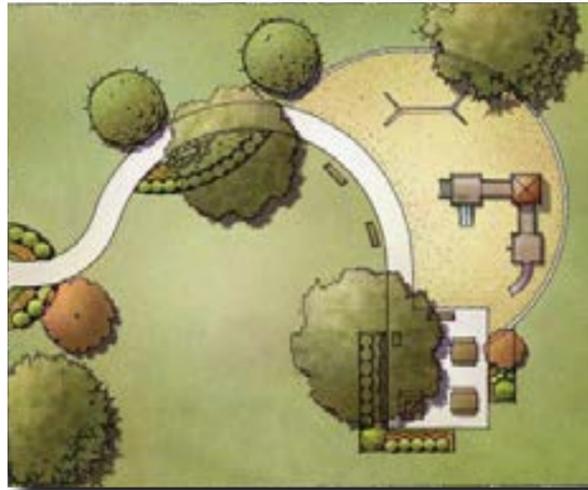


Types and Standards For Parks Found in the Norman Park System

The following categories of parks exist in Norman today and should be included as the City grows. Guidelines for each type are included to promote a consistent level of development as new parks in each category are built. These recommendations are guidelines, and each park type should be tailored to the area around it and its intended use.

Pocket Parks

Pocket parks, or mini-parks, are small green gathering spaces ranging from 1/8 acre to 1 acre. Due to the size of this type of park, parking is typically not provided. Therefore, pocket parks are accessed by pedestrian and bicycle means. Benches, fountains, landscaping, and other focal features are common items found in these parks. Size is not the key factor of the typical pocket park, but rather the quality of the landscaping and features that go into the park. Small green areas in a downtown area are examples of pocket parks.



Typical Pocket Park. This park is about 1/2 acre in size and offers amenities such as benches, landscaping and possibly a playground.

Many cities have adopted policies that ruled out pocket parks as a choice for future parks. Concerns have long been raised over the effectiveness of such small parks, as well as the higher per acre cost to maintain these smaller sites. However, a second school of thought argues that enormous benefits accrue from having easily accessible parks all over the city. Norman

should strongly value access to parks, and should encourage smaller parks where appropriate and green spaces that are accessible even if operational costs are somewhat higher.

Neighborhood Parks

In Norman, as in most cities, neighborhood parks should provide the foundation for recreation. Ideally, they provide facilities and recreation space for the entire family, and are within easy walking or bicycling distance of the people they serve.

The neighborhood park typically serves one large or several smaller neighborhoods. The ideal neighborhood park in Norman, generally 3 acres in size, should serve no more than 2,000 to 4,000 residents per park.

- ▶ Neighborhood parks should be accessible to residents who live within a one-half mile radius of the park. In some areas of the city, a smaller quarter mile service radius may be more appropriate.
- ▶ Neighborhood parks can be located adjacent to elementary or middle schools, so as to share acquisition and development costs with the school district. In the future, where possible, new neighborhood parks should be planned and developed in close coordination with the Norman Public Schools. This can result in significant cost savings and more efficient use of tax dollars to the city and the school district.
- ▶ Neighborhood parks are generally located away from major arterial streets and provide easy access for the users that surround it. A neighborhood park should be accessible without having to cross major arterial streets.

Size - The size of a neighborhood park may vary considerably due to physical locations around the park. An ideal size for neighborhood parks in Norman should be around three to ten acres. Parks may range in size from a minimum of two acres to a maximum of ten acres.

Location - If possible, neighborhood parks should be centrally located in the neighborhoods that they serve. The park should be accessible to pedestrian traffic from all parts of the area served, and should be located adjacent to local or minor collector streets which do not allow

high-speed traffic. Many cities require that neighborhood parks have streets on at least two sides of the park.

Facilities - Facilities located in current and future neighborhood parks in Norman should, at a minimum, include the following:

- ▶ Age appropriate playground equipment with adequate safety surfacing around the playground
- ▶ Unlighted tennis courts
- ▶ Lighted or unlighted multi-purpose courts for basketball and volleyball
- ▶ Active areas for unorganized play and for practice
- ▶ Picnic areas with benches, picnic tables and cooking grills
- ▶ Shaded pavilions and gazebos
- ▶ Jogging and exercise trails
- ▶ Practice backstop

Restrooms - Restrooms are typically not placed in smaller neighborhood parks because they increase maintenance and provide a location for illegal activities. Restrooms in community parks should be handicapped accessible.

Parking - Parking should vary based on the size of the park and facilities provided. A minimum of eight spaces per new neighborhood park are recommended with an additional two handicapped parking spaces per each neighborhood park. The exact amount of parking needed will vary based on the size of the park, the availability of safe on-street parking adjacent to the park, the facilities the park contains and the number of users attracted to the park. Smaller parks, if well placed in their neighborhoods, may not need any parking.

Lighting - Smaller neighborhood parks should include only lighting for security purposes.

The diagram on the following page illustrates a typical neighborhood park and some of the elements that the park might contain. Note that this is simply a typical arrangement, and each neighborhood park should be designed as a unique part of the neighborhood that surrounds it.





Example of a typical neighborhood park layout. This park is approximately 6 acres in size, and has good access from all sides. It is centered in the neighborhood that it serves.



Park location in the center of the area it serves.

Linear Parks

Linear parks are open park areas that generally follow some natural or man-made feature that is linear in nature, such as creeks, abandoned railroad rights-of-way or power line or utility corridor easements. In Norman, most of the linear park corridors are along natural drainage ways. Properly developed to facilitate pedestrian and bicycle travel, these parks can serve to link or connect other parks in the local system, as well as schools, neighborhood shopping, libraries, and other major destinations. No specific standards apply to linear/linkage parks other than the park should be large enough to adequately accommodate the resources they contain. They should also serve to help preserve open space.

Examples of linear parks in Norman include Hall Park Greenbelt, Doubletree Greenbelt, and the Legacy Trail.



Hall Park Greenbelt is an example of a linear park in Norman.





Community Parks

Community parks are larger parks that serve a group of neighborhoods or a portion of a city. Community parks are usually reached by automobiles, although residents adjacent to the park and trail users may walk or bicycle to it. A variety of recreational facilities are provided, including in some cases, lighted playing fields for organized sports, hike/bike trails and sufficient parking to accommodate participants, spectators, and other park users. The park facilities at Reaves Park are ideal examples of community park facilities. Other examples of community parks in Norman include Andrews Park, Griffin Park, and Little Axe Park.

Size - The typical community park should be large enough so it can provide a variety of facilities while still leaving open space for unstructured recreation and natural areas. The park should also have

room for expansion, as new facilities are required. A typical community park varies in size from 10 acres to over 50 acres.

Location - Community parks should be located near a major thoroughfare to provide easy access from different parts of the city. Because of the potential for noise and bright lights at night, community parks should be buffered from adjacent residential areas.

Facilities - Facilities generally located in community parks may include:

- ▶ Play equipment
- ▶ Active free play areas
- ▶ Picnic areas and pavilion(s)
- ▶ Restrooms
- ▶ Jogging, bicycle or nature trails, sometimes lighted for evening use
- ▶ Lighted ball fields, suitable for organized competitive events

- ▶ Recreation center (if appropriate)
- ▶ Sufficient off-street parking based on facilities provided and size of park
- ▶ Security lighting
- ▶ Other facilities as needed which can take advantage of the unique characteristics of the site, such as nature trails, fishing ponds, swimming pools, amphitheaters etc.

Parking - This varies based on the facilities provided and the size of park. The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) recommends a minimum of five spaces per acre, plus additional parking for specific facilities within the park such as pools or ball fields. The specific amount of parking provided in each park should be determined by the facilities provided in that park.

A typical community park layout, illustrating the types of facilities that might occur in a 20 to 30 acre community park.



Andrews Park (top) and Griffin Park (bottom) are two examples of community parks in Norman.





Regional Parks

Regional parks are large parks that serve an entire region and cater to people beyond just a city. Regional parks are reached by automobiles, although residents adjacent to the park and trail users may walk or bicycle to it. The state park and areas around Lake Thunderbird are examples of regional parks in Norman.

Size - The typical regional park is more than 300 acres in size.

Location - Regional parks are located adjacent to major roadways or freeways to facilitate access.

Facilities - Facilities generally located in regional parks may include:

- ▶ Play equipment
- ▶ Active free play areas
- ▶ Picnic areas and pavilion(s)
- ▶ Restrooms
- ▶ Jogging, bicycle or nature trails, sometimes lighted for evening use
- ▶ Lighted ball fields, suitable for organized competitive events
- ▶ Recreation center (if appropriate)
- ▶ Security lighting
- ▶ Multi-purpose recreational fields
- ▶ Fishing ponds where feasible
- ▶ Amphitheaters
- ▶ Equestrian trails
- ▶ Observatory
- ▶ Botanical gardens
- ▶ Veloway
- ▶ Dog park
- ▶ Canoe rentals / paddle boat rentals
- ▶ Putt putt golf
- ▶ Disc golf course
- ▶ BMX course
- ▶ Sculpture garden
- ▶ Aquatic complex
- ▶ Preserved open space

Parking - It is recommended there be a minimum of five spaces per acre, plus additional parking for specific facilities within the park such as pools or ball fields. The specific amount of parking provided in each park should be determined by the facilities provided in that park.

Special Purpose Parks

Special purpose parks are designed to accommodate specialized recreational activities. Because the facility needs for each activity type are different, each special purpose park usually provides for one or a few activities. Examples of special purpose parks include:

- ▶ Golf courses
- ▶ Athletic fields or complexes
- ▶ Nature centers or large natural preserves
- ▶ Aquatic centers
- ▶ Tennis complexes

Athletic complexes and golf courses are the most common types of special purpose parks. Athletic complexes seek to provide fields for organized play in a location that can accommodate the traffic and noise that a large number of users can generate. Athletic complexes should include sufficient fields so that leagues can congregate at one facility and not have to spread out in different locations.

An example of special purpose park in Norman is Westwood Park.



Size of the Park System in Norman

Currently the City of Norman Park System includes 65 parks totaling 1,130.3 acres and 6 indoor recreation sites. Table 3 - 1 summarizes the existing park facilities. Tables 3 - 2 to 3 - 5 on the following pages give a brief summary of the different types of parks in Norman.

Total Number of Parks	65
Total System Acreage	1,140.7
Neighborhood Parks	54 Parks totaling 282.7 acres
Undeveloped Acreage	5.1 acres
Developed Acreage	277.6 acres
Community Parks	6 Parks totaling 512.1 acres
Undeveloped Acreage	242.5 acres
Developed Acreage	269.6 acres
Linear Parks	3 Parks totaling 56.0 acres
Special Purpose Parks	2 Parks totaling 289.9 acres
Recreation Centers	6 Centers totaling 56,884 sq. ft.
Largest Park	Griffin Memorial Park (160 acres)
Smallest Park	Centennial Park (0.2 acres)
Developed vs. Undeveloped	688.3 acres vs. 452.4 acres

Existing Park Reviews

A review of each of the existing parks in Norman begins on page 3 - 11. The reviews include a summary of the facilities in each park, as well as observations regarding the arrangement and condition of facilities. Key potential improvements to each park are discussed in this section.





Table 3-3 Community Parks and Recreation Facilities

Park Name	Overall Acreage		Address	Sector	Trail / Walking Path (in miles)	Backstop	Soccer Practice Field	Basketball Court	Playground	Soccer Field	Baseball Field	Softball Field	Tennis Court	Volleyball Court	Skate Park	Shuffleboard	Horseshoes	Dog Park	Exercise Station	Disc Golf Course	Swimming Pool	Spraygrounds	Amphitheater	Pavilion	Gazebo	Benches	Picnic Table	BBQ Grills	Bike Rack	Drinking Fountain	Bridge	Historical Structure	Water Feature / Detention Pond	Parking	Restroom Building
	Undev.	Dev.																																	
Community Parks					←←←←← Active Facilities →→→→→																Aquatics	←←←←← Passive Facilities →→→→→										←← Infrastructure →→			
Andrews Park		17.5	201 W. Daws St.	NW	1.24	3		2.5	3						1						1	1	1	1	1	40	17	3	1	3	7	1		X	1
Griffin Park		158.1	1001 E. Robinson	NE	1.16				1	16	9	5						1		1			2			15	1	1				1		X	4
Little Axe		14.2	1000 168th Ave. NE	SE			2.5		1		3									1					1	4		1					X	1	
Reaves Park		79.8	2501 Jenkins Ave.	SE	0.86	1			3		6	6		4									4		3	71	10	1	3				X	1	
Ruby Grant Park	146.5			NW																															
John H. Saxon Park	96.0			SE																															
Total	242.5	269.6			3.26	4	0	5.0	8	16	18	11	0	4	1	0	0	1	0	2	0	1	1	7	1	44	107	14	4	6	7	2	1	7	

Special Purpose Parks	Undev.		Address	Sector	Trail / Walking Path (in miles)	Backstop	Soccer Practice Field	Basketball Court	Playground	Soccer Field	Baseball Field	Softball Field	Tennis Court	Volleyball Court	Skate Park	Shuffleboard	Horseshoes	Dog Park	Exercise Station	Disc Golf Course	Swimming Pool	Spraygrounds	Amphitheater	Pavilion	Gazebo	Benches	Picnic Table	BBQ Grills	Bike Rack	Drinking Fountain	Bridge	Historical Structure	Water Feature / Detention Pond	Parking	Restroom Building		
	Undev.	Dev.																																			
Special Purpose Parks					←←←←← Active Facilities →→→→→																Aquatics	←←←←← Passive Facilities →→→→→										←← Infrastructure →→					
Sutton Wilderness	160.0		1920 12th Ave. NE	NE									12																								
Westwood Park		129.9	2400 Westport Dr.	NW	0.10																1														X		
Tennis Center Acreage		4.0																																			
Swimming Pool Acreage		2.0																																			
Parking and Building Acreage		4.6																																			
Golf Course Acreage		119.3																																			
Total	160.0	129.9			0.10							12									1																

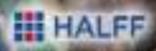




Table 3-4 Linear Parks Facilities

Park Name	Overall Acreage		Address	Sector	Trail / Walking Path (in miles)	Backstop	Soccer Practice Field	Basketball Court	Playground	Soccer Field	Baseball Field	Softball Field	Tennis Court	Volleyball Court	Skate Park	Shuffleboard	Horseshoes	Dog Park	Exercise Station	Disc Golf Course	Swimming Pool	Spraygrounds	Amphitheater	Pavilion	Gazebo	Benches	Picnic Table	BBQ Grills	Bike Rack	Drinking Fountain	Bridge	Historical Structure	Water Feature / Detention Pond	Parking	Restroom Building
	Undev.	Dev.																																	
Linear Parks					←←←←← Active Facilities →→→→→															Aquatics		←←←← Passive Facilities →→→→→						←← Infrastructure →→→							
Doubletree Greenbelt	8.8		24th Ave. at Oak Forest	NE	0.56																														
Hall Park Greenbelt	39.0		24th Ave. at Robinson St.	NE	0.33																												1		
Legacy Trails		8.2	From Acres St. to Duffy St.	Citywide	1.38																														
Total	47.8	8.2			2.27	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	





Table 3-5 Recreation Centers

Center Name	Square Footage	Address	Sector	Gymnasium	Dance Studio	Classrooms	Kitchen/Food Prep Area	Free Weights Room	Cardio Fitness Equipment Room	Indoor Pool	Racquetball/Squash Courts	Teen Room	Gameroom	Childcare Room	Arts and Crafts Room	Meeting Rooms	Indoor Walking Track
Indoor Recreation Centers				S.F.													
12th Ave. Rec Center		1701 12th Ave. NE	NE	2	1		1						1	1			
Irving Rec Center		125 Vicksburg	SE	1	1		1						1	1		1	
Little Axe Community Center		1000 168th Ave. NE	SE			1	1										
Reaves Dance Center		121 E. Constitution St.	SW				1										
Senior Citizen Center		Symmes St. at Peters Ave.	SE			1	1								1		
Whittier Rec Center		2000 W. Brooks St.	SW	1	1		1						1	1			
Total	56,844			4	3	2	6	0					3	3	1	1	
Other Private Facilities				S.F.													
YMCA		1350 Lexington Ave.	NE	2				1	1	1			1	1			
Total				2				1	1	1			1	1			





Adkin's Crossing Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

Address: 2136 24th Ave. SW
 Sector: Southwest
 Size of Park: 6.0 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 1 Soccer practice field
- ▶ 1 Playground
- ▶ 2 Benches
- ▶ 5 Picnic Tables
- ▶ 1 BBQ Grill
- ▶ 1 Bike Rack
- ▶ 1 Historical Structure
- ▶ Off-street Parking

Assessment of this park: The picnic tables and benches are in adequate condition. The wood tables and benches will most likely need replacing in the near future. There is no fall surface around the swing area.

Key Needs: Add shade shelter, replace tables, add fall safety material around swings immediately. Replace park sign. This park may ultimately serve as a gateway to a future Canadian River park which will require additional parking and visitor maps/kiosks.



Berkeley Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

Address: 3750 Astor Dr.
 Sector: Northwest
 Size of Park: 3.0 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 0.36 Mile Walking/Jogging Trail
- ▶ 1 Backstop
- ▶ 1 Soccer Practice Field
- ▶ 1 Basketball Court
- ▶ 2 Playgrounds
- ▶ 3 Benches
- ▶ 1 Picnic Table
- ▶ 1 Bike Rack
- ▶ 1 Drinking Fountain
- ▶ No Off-street Parking

Assessment of this park: This park has good access from two major streets within the neighborhood it serves. The amenities are in good condition. There are poles for volleyball but there is no designated court.

Key Needs: Replace/upgrade park sign, add pavilion in the park.





Boyd View Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

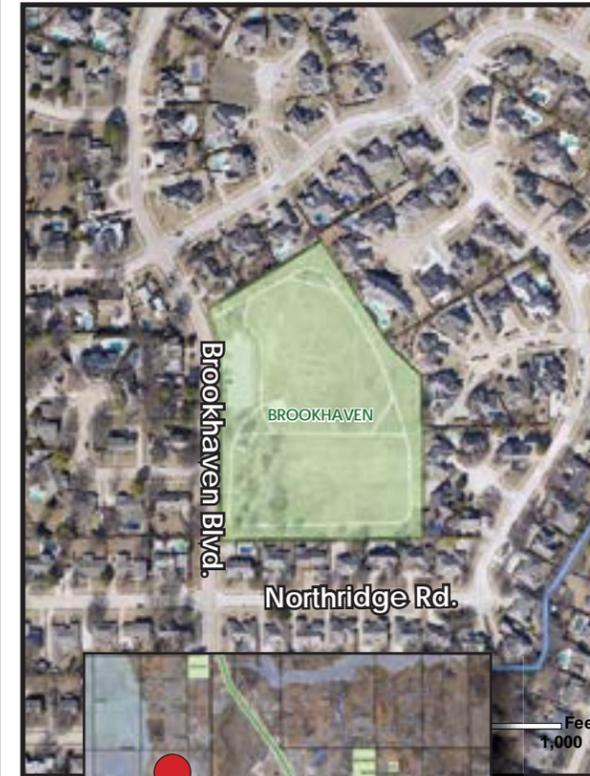
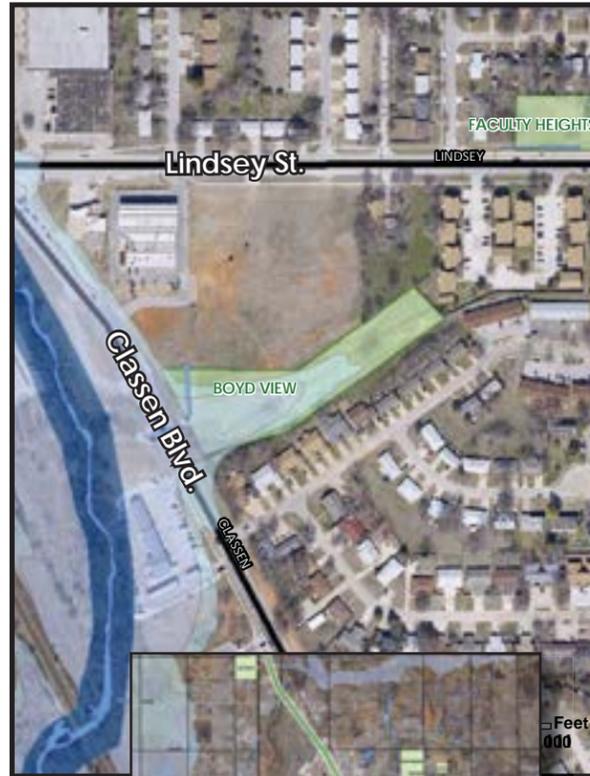
Address: Classen Blvd.
Sector: Southeast
Size of Park: 2.2 undeveloped acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ Undeveloped/serves as open space

Assessment of this park: Because this park is undeveloped, there is not a conditional assessment of the facilities. However, the park is very inaccessible with visibility only from one street, homes backing up to it, and no on-street parking available.

Key Needs: No significant improvements are recommended for this park.



Brookhaven Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

Address: 1801 N. Brookhaven Blvd.
Sector: Northwest
Size of Park: 6.7 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 0.51 Mile Walking/Jogging Trail
- ▶ 2 Backstops
- ▶ 1 Soccer Practice Field
- ▶ 1/2 Basketball Court
- ▶ 1 Playground
- ▶ 1 Gazebo
- ▶ 2 Benches
- ▶ 3 Picnic Tables
- ▶ Off-street Parking

Assessment of this park: This park is only visible from one street with homes on the other three sides. The benches and picnic tables are in excellent condition. This park has plenty of open space for unstructured recreation. There is a shrub in the middle of the fall surface of the playground near the swings. It should be monitored and trimmed to not interfere with swing set.

Key Needs: No immediate needs. Replace equipment as needed.





Brookhaven Square

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

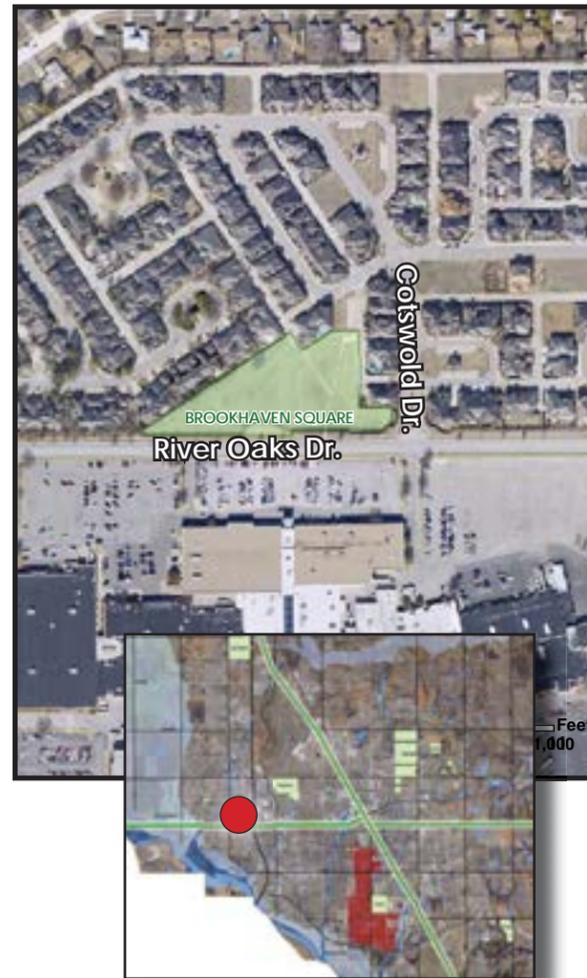
Address: 3333 River Oaks Dr.
Sector: Northwest
Size of Park: 2.1 undeveloped acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ Undeveloped as a park
- ▶ Detention Pond

Assessment of this park: This park is solely a triangular detention pond with little access to it. Homes back up to it on two sides and a brick wall makes up the third side. There is no park sign and no amenities.

Key Needs: Add a park sign, a small shade pavilion and benches at key intervals around the detention basin. Add trees along River Oaks Drive as feasible.



Canadian Trails Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

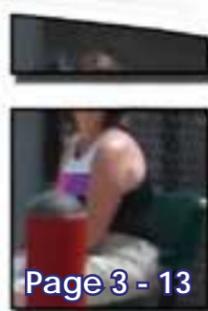
Address: 3600 Canadian Trails Dr.
Sector: Southwest
Size of Park: 1.3 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 0.14 Walking/Jogging Trail
- ▶ 1 Playground
- ▶ 1 Pavilion
- ▶ 2 Benches
- ▶ 2 Picnic Tables

Assessment of this park: This park is located entirely in the Canadian River floodplain. It also has limited visibility from nearby streets and is at the back of a neighborhood behind homes. Existing park amenities are in good condition. There are attractive shade trees located along the sides of the park and around picnicking areas.

Key Needs: No immediate improvements are recommended. In the future, consider acquiring additional adjacent floodplain lands to allow this park to serve as a neighborhood gateway to a river greenbelt.





Cascade Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

Address: 3499 Astor Dr.
Sector: Northwest
Size of Park: 4.9 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 1 Backstop
- ▶ 1 Playground
- ▶ 2 Benches
- ▶ 2 Picnic Tables
- ▶ 1 Drinking Fountain
- ▶ No Off-street Parking

Assessment of this park: This park is not very accessible. Although there are major streets on two sides of the park, the amenities are located away from the streets. There are homes that back up to the park on the other two sides. There is no on-street parking available. There is a gas pipeline easement and a small manmade drainage channel which designates the northern boundary of the park and further serves as secondary access from Astor Drive.

Key Needs: Add shade structures. Designate one striped handicapped parking space along Astor Drive if possible and build accessible sidewalk to playground. Add trees to the park where feasible. Acquire parkland north of the concrete pilot channel, and develop a trail that bridges the pilot channel. Provide accessible off-street parking along Astor north of the channel.



Castlerock Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

Address: 4136 Castlerock Rd.
Sector: Northwest
Size of Park: 3.4 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 0.30 Mile Walking/Jogging Trail
- ▶ 1 Backstop
- ▶ 1 Soccer Practice Field
- ▶ 1 Playground
- ▶ 4 Exercise Stations
- ▶ 3 Benches
- ▶ 2 Picnic Tables
- ▶ 1 BBQ Grill
- ▶ 1 Bike Rack
- ▶ 1/2 Basketball Court

Assessment of this park: The park is visible from one neighborhood street. It is adjacent to a powerline corridor and a trail that follows the powerlines. The park could serve as a major trailhead for the trail. There is an access point to the park which runs between two homes. The amenities in the park are in good condition.

Key Needs: Add shade trees as feasible. Add shade pavilion. Designate handicapped parking areas along Brownwood Lane. Rebuild drainage structure in park to reduce water retention.





Centennial Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

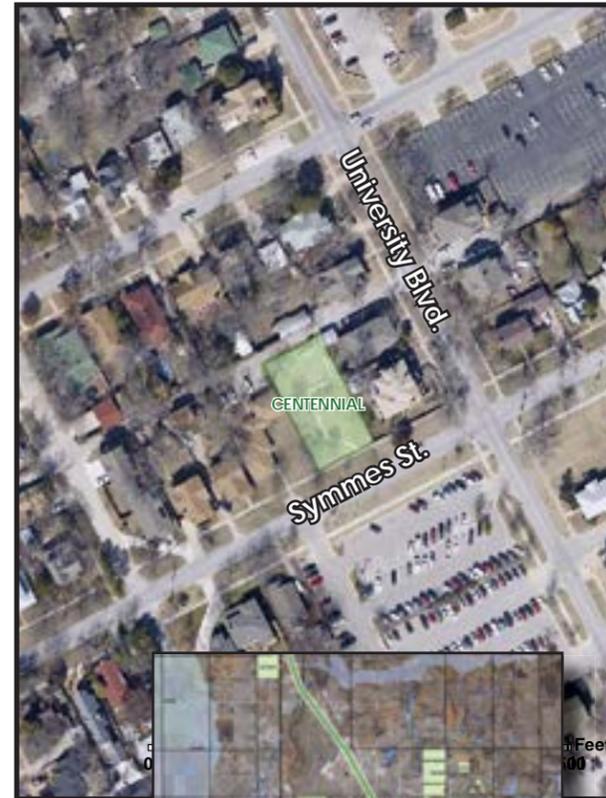
Address: 411 W. Symmes St.
Sector: Southwest
Size of Park: 0.2 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 1 Playground
- ▶ 2 Benches
- ▶ 2 Picnic Tables
- ▶ 1 BBQ Grill
- ▶ 1 Bike Rack
- ▶ 1 Drinking Fountain

Assessment of this park: This is a small park that is tucked away between two homes. Although it is located on a major collector street, the park amenities are located further away from the street and are not very visible. The playground equipment is an older style of monkey bars and see-saws. The picnic tables and benches are in good condition.

Key Needs: Update park sign. The older playground equipment was requested by the residents of this neighborhood to reflect the context of this historic part of town. It was installed in 2003.



Cherry Creek Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

Address: 530 Stonewell Dr.
Sector: Southwest
Size of Park: 6.2 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 1 Soccer Practice Field
- ▶ 1/2 Basketball Court
- ▶ 1 Playground
- ▶ 1 Bench
- ▶ 1 Picnic Table
- ▶ 1 Bike Rack

Assessment of this park: This park has a significant amount of open space for unstructured recreation. This park is located at the back of the neighborhood and is only accessible down one minor neighborhood street. The amenities are in good condition except for the soccer practice goals which are rusted.

Key Needs: Long term, consider acquisition of floodplain lands along the Canadian River to allow this park to serve as a neighborhood access point to the river greenbelt.





Chisholm's Cattle Trail

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

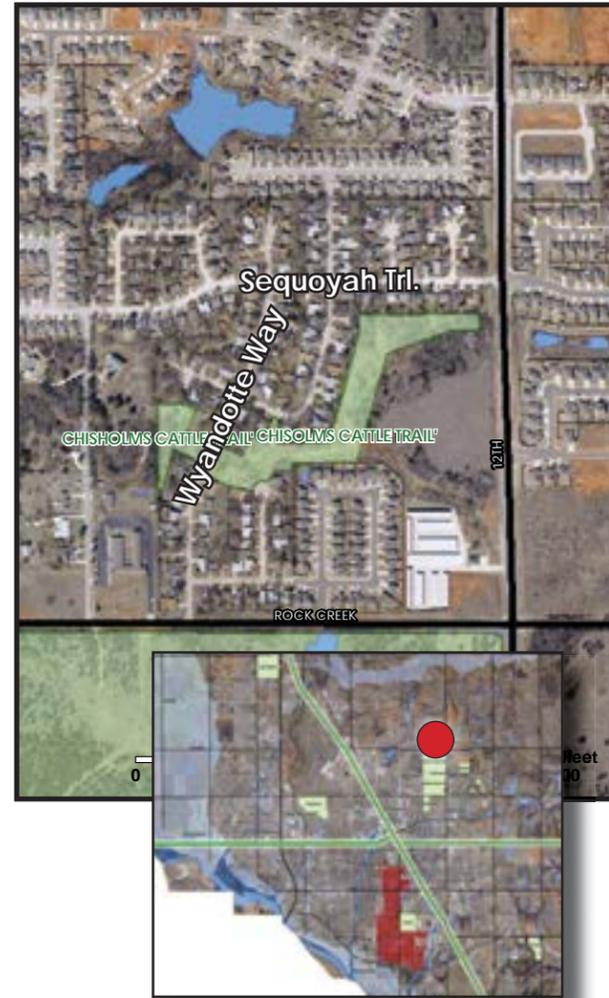
Address: 2515 Wyandotte Way
Sector: Northeast
Size of Park: 6.8 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 1 Playground
- ▶ 4 Picnic Tables
- ▶ 1 BBQ Grill
- ▶ 1 Drinking Fountain
- ▶ 1 Bridge

Assessment of this park: This park has very limited visibility with homes backing up to various sides. However, it preserves an attractive greenbelt. The playground and amenities are in good condition. The bridge crosses over the creek, allowing for access to all areas of the park making the bridge a necessity.

Key Needs: Add handicapped accessible parking area along Wyandotte Way. Add a hard surface trail that connects the bridge to both sides of the park. Update park sign.



Colonial Commons Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

Address: 1909 Beaumont Dr.
Sector: Southeast
Size of Park: 5.6 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 2 Backstops
- ▶ Practice Soccer Field
- ▶ 2 Benches
- ▶ Playground
- ▶ 1/2 Basketball Court
- ▶ Picnic Table
- ▶ Drinking Fountain
- ▶ Open Space

Assessment of this park: The picnic table has wooden seating and table top which is in poor condition. The playground is in good condition. The backstops and soccer practice field are in good condition. There is a limited amount of shade trees in the park and more trees are needed.

Key Needs: Designate one striped handicapped accessible parking space along Beaumont Dr. Aggressively add shade trees to this park. Add one to two shade pavilions.





Colonial Estates Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

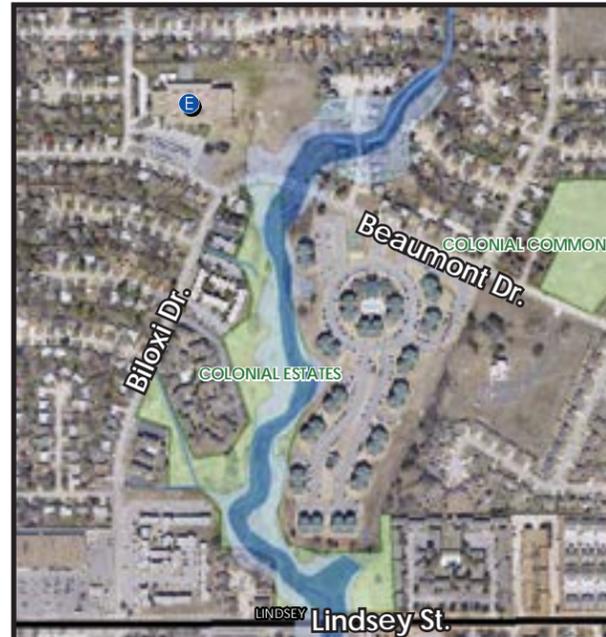
Address: 1641 E. Lindsey St.
Sector: Southeast
Size of Park: 16.2 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 0.60 Mile Walking/Jogging Trail
- ▶ 1 Disc Golf Course
- ▶ 6 Benches
- ▶ 5 Picnic Tables
- ▶ 3 Bridges
- ▶ Playground
- ▶ 1 Pavilion
- ▶ Splash Pad (Sept. 2009)
- ▶ Parking

Assessment of this park: This park follows a creek corridor and is one of the most beautiful parks in Norman. There is an asphalt trail through the park which is in good condition; however, it is too narrow for multiple users. There is parking at the entrance of the park off Lindsey St. However, a significant portion of the park has apartment complexes backing up to it, and the park provides significant open space to those apartment residents. The playground and the picnic table are in good condition. The benches are wooden and are currently in adequate condition. Because of the creek, there is a significant amount of open space in this park. The splash pad was installed in September, 2009.

Key Needs: Widen the trail to allow for multiple users. Enhance the disc golf course with an information kiosk. Add shade structures over the playground area. Replace benches and picnic tables as needed.



Creighton Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

Address: 2001 Creighton Dr.
Sector: Northeast
Size of Park: 0.9 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 1 Playground
- ▶ 2 Benches

Assessment of this park: This park is tucked away behind homes and is not very visible from the street. There is no park sign designating it as a park. The playgrounds and benches are in good condition. There is a concrete trail leading into the Hall Park Greenbelt.

Key Needs: Long range, enhance park edge with landscaping and other features.





Crestland Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

Address: 501 Crestland Dr.
Sector: Southeast
Size of Park: 6.9 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 0.26 Mile Walking/Jogging Trail
- ▶ 1 Playground
- ▶ 1 Bench
- ▶ 2 Picnic Tables
- ▶ 1 BBQ Grill
- ▶ 1 Bike Rack

Assessment of this park: This park is located at the back of the neighborhood it serves but has excellent frontage along Alameda Park Dr.

Key Needs: Replace park sign, add a half court multi purpose court and shade pavilion, enhance the park edge along Alameda Park Drive with fencing and trees.



Doubletree Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

Address: 2009 Timbercrest Dr.
Sector: Northeast
Size of Park: 0.8 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 1/2 Basketball Court
- ▶ 2 Playgrounds
- ▶ 1 Picnic Table

Assessment of this park: The basketball court has two new goals. The wooden picnic table is in poor condition and needs replacement. The tot aged playground is in good condition but the structure is slightly leaning. The youth aged playground is in excellent condition.

Key Needs: Add shade pavilion, enhance park sign.





Eagle Cliff Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

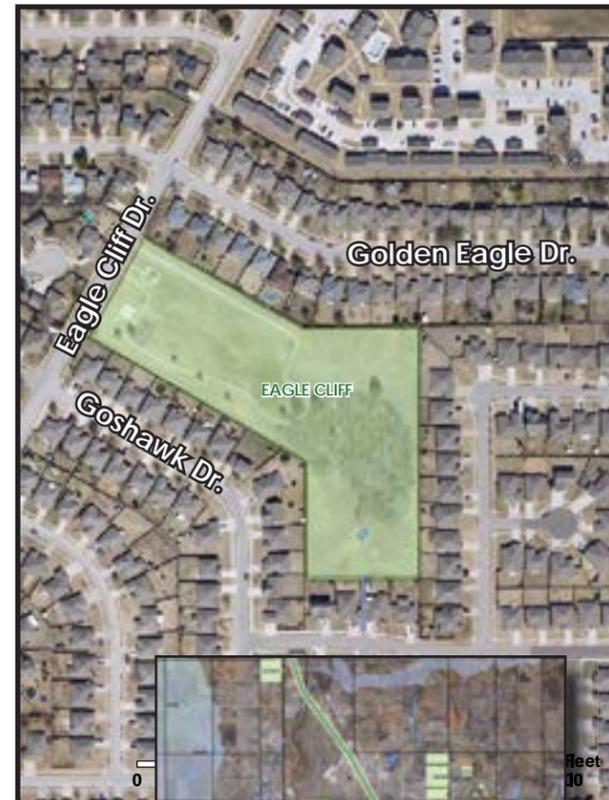
Address: 3901 Eagle Cliff Dr.
Sector: Southwest
Size of Park: 6.8 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 0.25 Mile Walking/Jogging Trail
- ▶ 1 Soccer Practice Field
- ▶ 1/2 Basketball Court
- ▶ 2 Playgrounds
- ▶ 3 Benches
- ▶ 2 Picnic Tables
- ▶ 1 Bike Rack
- ▶ 1 Backstop

Assessment of this park: The park sign has been removed because of damage and needs replacing. The asphalt trail is narrow. When the trail is renovated, it should be widened to at least 6 feet. There is very limited shade in the park.

Key Needs: The picnic areas should be covered and more trees should be planted. There is no handicap accessibility into the park. Enhance the park sign.



Earl Sneed Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

Address: 1381 Classen Blvd.
Sector: Southeast
Size of Park: 0.5 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 1 Gazebo
- ▶ 2 Benches

Assessment of this park: This is a small park located adjacent to one major arterial and one major collector street. The pavilion and benches are wood and are currently in good condition. The wood structure will need to be monitored and replaced as needed. There is beautiful landscaping in this park and concrete trail along the back side of the park. Its small size precludes adding other park features.

Key Needs: Consider adding very small play feature if feasible.





Eastridge Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

Address: 1700 N. Clearwater Dr.
Sector: Southeast
Size of Park: 5.3 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 1 Soccer Practice Field
- ▶ 1/2 Basketball Court
- ▶ 2 Playgrounds
- ▶ 2 Benches
- ▶ 4 Picnic Tables
- ▶ 1 Bike Rack
- ▶ 1 Drinking Fountain
- ▶ 2 Backstops

Assessment of this park: This park is almost entirely surrounded by fences of houses which create very limited visibility into the park. The picnic tables, benches and playgrounds are in good condition.

Key Needs: The sign to the entrance of the park needs to be replaced. Add one to two small pavilions. Add a walking trail around the park.



Eastwood Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

Address: 1001 S. Ponca Ave.
Sector: Southeast
Size of Park: 6.6 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 4 Playgrounds
- ▶ 3 Benches
- ▶ 2 Picnic Tables
- ▶ 3 BBQ Grills
- ▶ 1 Bridge

Assessment of this park: Eastwood is one of the most beautiful parks in Norman, with large mature trees and rolling topography. The playgrounds in this park are the older style of monkey bars and slides. The playground equipment is rusted in some areas. There is no fall surface around these playground elements. To access the park off the street, one has to walk down a steep hill with no walking sidewalk or support rails. The wooden benches are in poor condition. There is a trail along one side of the park leading to the creek corridor.

Key Needs: Replace play equipment and add fall surface material quickly. Improve access from Boyd Street. Replace benches and park sign. Add an architecturally compatible pavilion that complements the older architecture of the surrounding neighborhood.





Faculty Heights Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

Address: 1017 E. Lindsey St.
Sector: Southeast
Size of Park: 1.1 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ Playground
- ▶ 1 Picnic Table
- ▶ 2 Benches
- ▶ Open Space

Assessment of this park: This park has access from only one side, off Lindsey Street. The other three sides of the park have homes backing up to it. There is a chain link perimeter fence along Lindsey Street which increases safety but should be removed. There are large trees around the playground area which add shade. There is no access from the neighborhoods along Missouri Street at the north side of the park. There is no off-street parking associated with this park which limits its use.

Key Needs: If feasible, as properties are sold, pursue access easement from Missouri Street. Develop new, attractive landscape edge and fence along Lindsey Street. Replace or enhance park sign. If feasible, create gate access at the western end of the park along Lindsey Street.



Falls Lakeview Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

Address: 3280 108th Ave. NE
Sector: Northeast
Size of Park: 24.1 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 1 Backstop
- ▶ 1 Baseball Field
- ▶ Playground
- ▶ 1 Drinking Fountain
- ▶ 1 Volleyball Court
- ▶ Restrooms
- ▶ 1 Practice Soccer Field

Assessment of this park: This park is located in the far eastern portion of the city, north of Lake Thunderbird. This park has an extensive amount of tree coverage, especially along the road and around the playground. It serves as both the neighborhood park and larger community park for a large northeastern area of the City.

Key Needs: Add a medium to large size shade pavilion near the center of the park. Add a natural surface walking trail around the park.





Frances Cate Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

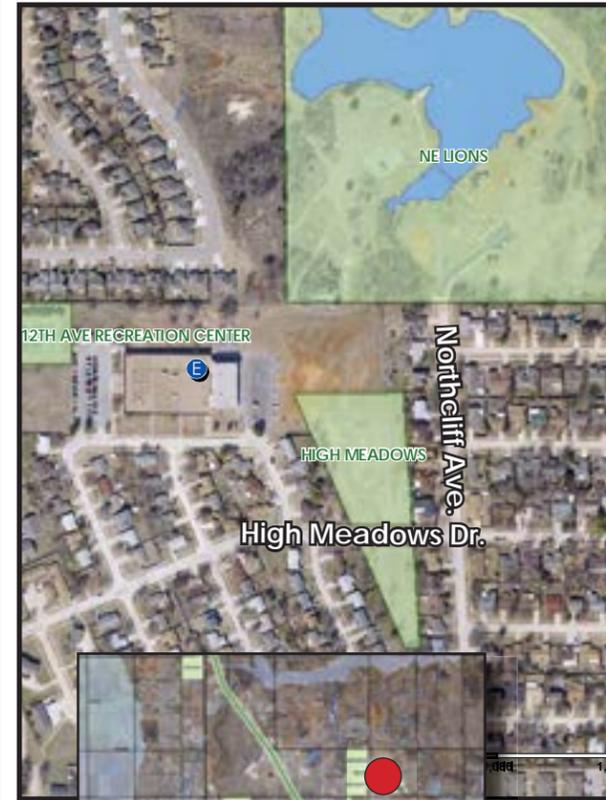
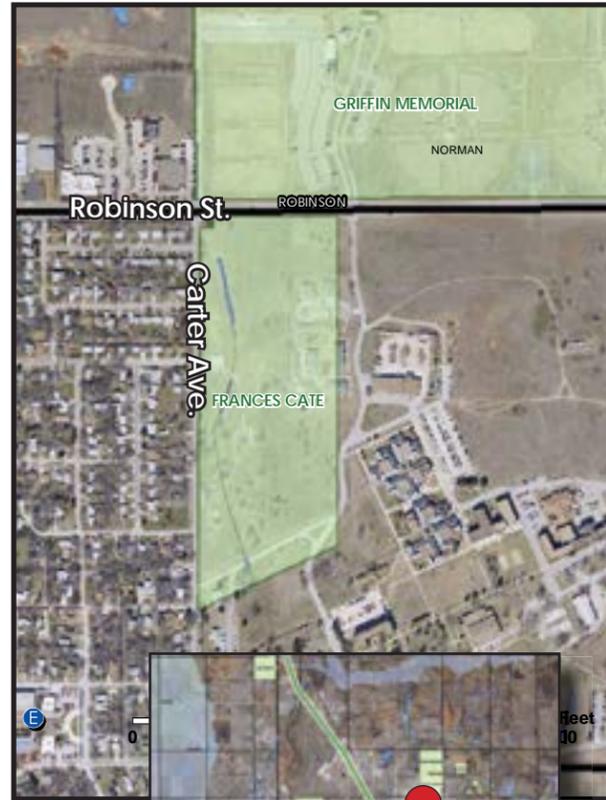
Address: 333 N. Carter
Sector: Northeast
Size of Park: 25.4 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 0.14 Mile Walking/Jogging Trail
- ▶ 2 Backstops
- ▶ 2 Soccer Practice Fields
- ▶ 1/2 Basketball Court
- ▶ 1 Playground
- ▶ 1 Pavilion
- ▶ 3 Benches
- ▶ 6 Picnic Tables
- ▶ 2 BBQ Grills
- ▶ Parking

Assessment of this park: This park is visible from a major arterial road. The benches and picnic tables are in good condition. There is plenty of open space in this park to allow for unstructured recreation. While very large in size, the park serves as a quieter, more accessible neighborhood park for homes south of Robinson. Consider upgrading the practice soccer fields at the northern end of the park to enhance the tournament quality of the soccer complex. An existing drainage site in the park may need to be relocated to allow for proper placement of the soccer fields.

Key Needs: Add two to three medium sized pavilions. This park's central location and attractive nature make it an ideal location for family gatherings. Expand the trail around the park. Enhance the park edge along Robinson to create a green edge across from Griffin Park.



High Meadows Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

Address: 1525 High Meadows Dr.
Sector: Northeast
Size of Park: 2.6 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ Open Space
- ▶ 1 Practice Soccer Field
- ▶ 0.24 Mile Walking/Jogging Trail

Assessment of this park: This park is located adjacent to an elementary school. The school property has a backstop, another soccer practice field, four half court basketball courts, a playground and 4-square courts. However, the only amenity on the parkland is one practice soccer field. This park has very limited visibility and its most accessible point is off the school property. Homes back up to the park on two sides of the triangle shape.

Key Needs: Add a small shade pavilion on either side of High Meadows Drive. Consider trading a portion of this site to Norman Public Schools and acquiring more land adjacent to the 12th Avenue Recreation Center.





June Benson Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

Address: 209 E. Alameda

Sector: Northeast

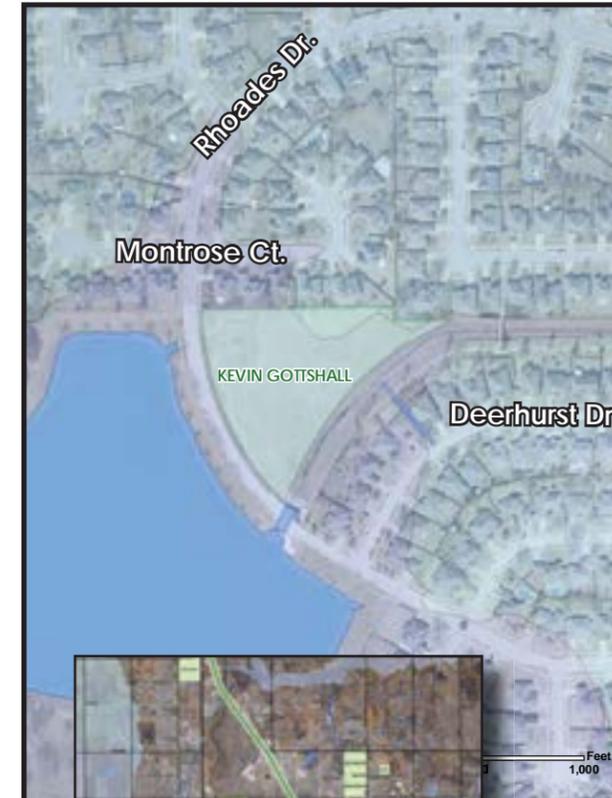
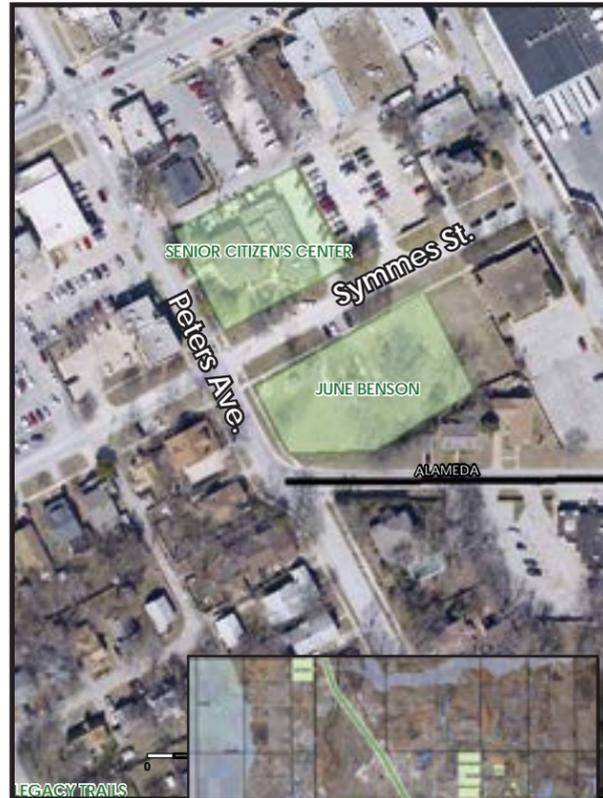
Size of Park: 0.3 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 2 Playgrounds
- ▶ 2 Shuffleboard Courts
- ▶ 1 Horseshoe Pit
- ▶ 1 Gazebo
- ▶ 7 Benches
- ▶ 2 Picnic Tables
- ▶ 1 Bike Rack
- ▶ 1 Historical Structure (statue)
- ▶ Parking

Assessment of this park: The gazebo in this park is wood and currently in adequate condition. The metal benches and picnic tables are in good condition. The playground equipment is an older style of swings, slide, and monkey bars which was chosen by the surrounding neighborhoods and installed in 2004. The playgrounds and fall surface are in good condition. There is visible access to this park from streets on three sides.

Key Needs: Over time, replace the gazebo. Remove the pipe rail barrier around the park. Improve the shuffleboard courts. Consider adding a bocci ball court (lawn bowling). Consider adding two to three additional sculptural elements to this park.



Kevin Gottshall Memorial Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

Address: 53399 Cypress Lake Dr.

Sector: Northwest

Size of Park: 2.9 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 0.10 Mile Walking/Jogging Trail
- ▶ 1 Backstop
- ▶ 1 Soccer Practice Field
- ▶ 1/2 Basketball Court
- ▶ 1 Playground
- ▶ 2 Benches
- ▶ 1 Picnic Table
- ▶ 2 BBQ Grill
- ▶ 1 Drinking Fountain
- ▶ 2 Tetherball Poles

Assessment of this park: The amenities found in this park are in good condition. There is abundant shade in this park, especially over the playground and picnic areas. The private lake is across the street from the park. The park is well located within the neighborhood.

Key Needs: No current major needs in this park. Continue to monitor condition of facilities in the park.





Kiwanis Park

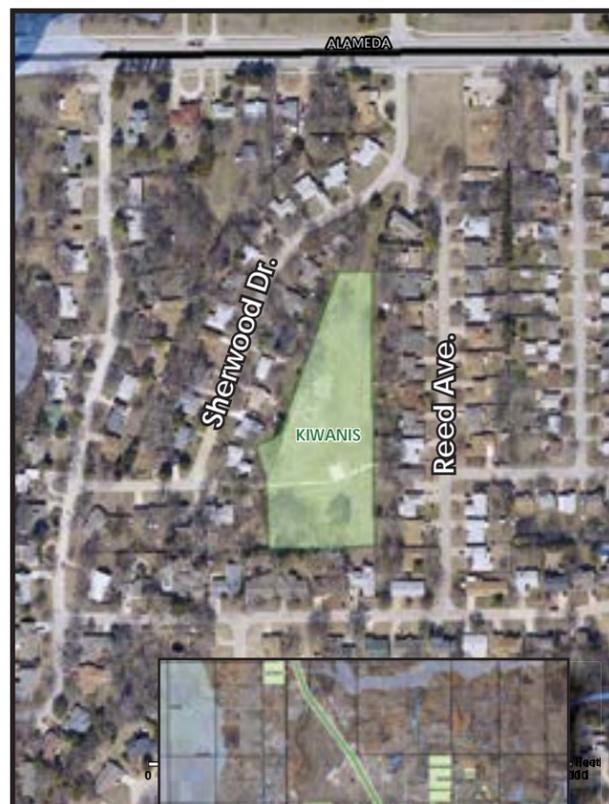
Type of Park: Neighborhood Park
Address: 635 Sherwood Dr.
Sector: Southeast
Size of Park: 2.9 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 1/2 Basketball Court
- ▶ 2 Playgrounds
- ▶ 3 Benches
- ▶ 3 Picnic Tables
- ▶ 1 BBQ Grill
- ▶ 1 Bike Rack
- ▶ 0.23 Mile Walking/Jogging Trail

Assessment of this park: The park sign and entry to the park are visible from the street, but homes back up to the park on three sides so accessibility is limited. The benches and picnic tables are wood. Currently they are in adequate condition; however this will need to be continually monitored and the amenities should be replaced as needed. The playground and basketball court are in good condition.

Key Needs: No immediate needs for this park. If feasible, add paved access from north end of the park.



Lions Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park
Address: 450 S. Flood Ave.
Sector: Southwest
Size of Park: 5.1 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 1 Backstop (lighted)
- ▶ 2 Playgrounds
- ▶ 2 Tennis Courts (lighted)
- ▶ 1 Pavilion
- ▶ 1 Gazebo
- ▶ 5 Benches
- ▶ 5 Picnic Tables
- ▶ 3 BBQ Grills
- ▶ 1 Drinking Fountain
- ▶ 1 Bike Rack
- ▶ 1 Historical Structure
- ▶ Parking
- ▶ Restrooms
- ▶ 0.40 Mile Walking/Jogging Trail

Assessment of this park: The fall surface around the swings is in poor condition and the fall surface around the playgrounds is in adequate condition. The metal benches are in excellent condition while the wooden picnic tables are in adequate condition.

Key Needs: Replace park features as necessary.





Lions Memorial Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park
Address: 514 Parkside Rd.
Sector: Northwest
Size of Park: 10.3 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 3 Backstops
- ▶ 1 Soccer Practice Field
- ▶ 1/2 Basketball Court
- ▶ 2 Playgrounds
- ▶ 3 Benches
- ▶ 1 Picnic Table
- ▶ 3 BBQ Grills
- ▶ 1 Bike Rack
- ▶ 0.40 Mile Walking/Jogging Trail

Assessment of this park: The wooden benches in this park are in poor condition. The fall surface around the swings is adequate. This park has abundant open space for unstructured recreation.

Key Needs: Add a small pavilion and replace or enhance park sign. Replace or enhance pipe rail edge along Parkside Road.



McGeorge Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park
Address: 631 Eufaula St.
Sector: Southeast
Size of Park: 0.5 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 0.07 Mile Walking/Jogging Trail
- ▶ 1/2 Basketball Court
- ▶ 1 Playground
- ▶ 3 Benches
- ▶ 2 Picnic Tables
- ▶ 1 Bike Rack
- ▶ Parking

Assessment of this park: One picnic table and one bench are wood and both are in poor condition. The playground is in good condition. There is visible access to this park with neighborhood streets on two sides. The guard rail around the park is rusted.

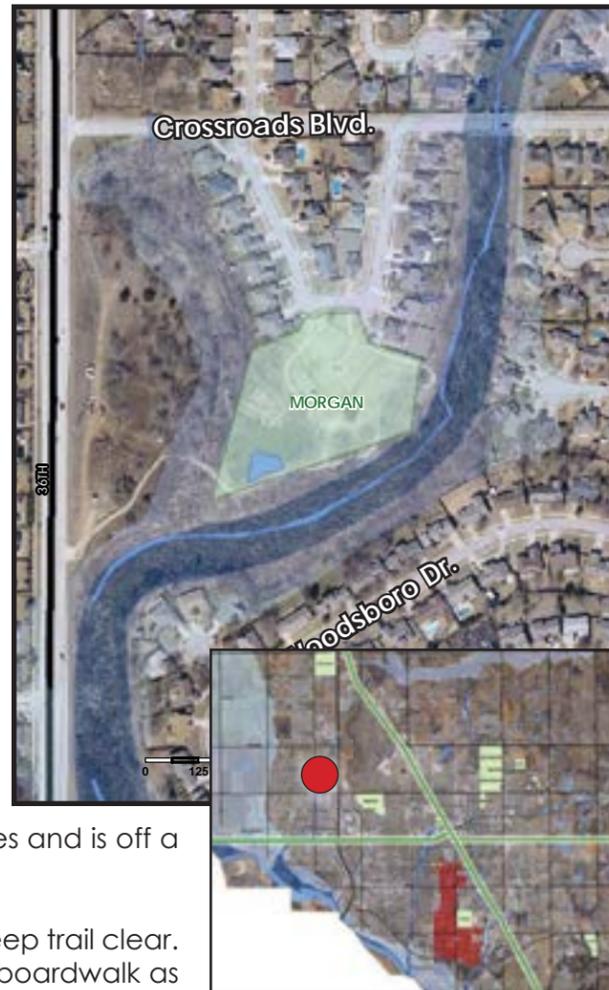
Key Needs: Upgrade or replace the pipe rail edge around the park. Over time, consider reducing the size of the play area to only two play features to provide additional active playgrounds. Upgrade or replace the park sign.





William Morgan Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park
Address: 1701 Schooner Dr.
Sector: Northwest
Size of Park: 3.0 developed acres



Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 0.38 Mile Walking/Jogging Trail
- ▶ 1/2 Basketball Court
- ▶ 1 Playground
- ▶ 1 Pavilion
- ▶ 4 Benches
- ▶ 1 Picnic Table
- ▶ 1 Bike Rack
- ▶ 1 Drinking Fountain
- ▶ Water Feature/Pond

Assessment of this park: This is an excellent example of a neighborhood park. The amenities in this park are in good condition. There is a boardwalk leading over the creek and around a small, attractive wetlands/pond. There is a creek on one side of the park and homes close to the entrance. The park is located at the front of the neighborhood it serves and is off a very minor neighborhood road.

Key Needs: Monitor vegetation along the trail and trim to keep trail clear. Replace/upgrade metal roofed shade structure. Replace boardwalk as needed for safety.



Northeast Lions Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park
Address: 1800 Northcliff Ave.
Sector: Northeast
Size of Park: 34.9 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 0.12 Mile Walking/Jogging Trail
- ▶ 1 Disc Golf Course
- ▶ 1 Playground
- ▶ Fishing Pier
- ▶ Bridge
- ▶ Water Feature/Pond
- ▶ Large Pavilion
- ▶ 9 Picnic Tables
- ▶ 10 Benches
- ▶ 8 BBQ Grills
- ▶ 1 Drinking Fountain
- ▶ Parking
- ▶ 1 Restroom Building
- ▶ Open Space
- ▶ Parking

Assessment of this park: This park is one of Norman's hidden jewels. It is built around a beautiful pond and is a very quiet location. The amenities in the park are in good condition. This large passive park has a great opportunity for nature trails through much of the park and around the lake. Currently, most of this area is used by the disc golf course. The picnicking facilities and playground are away from the main entrance and parking area, but overlook the pond.

Key Needs: If still feasible, acquire access to the park from the development to the north. The new neighborhood should have been compelled to have frontage on the pond, instead of allowing more homes to back up to the park. If at all feasible, acquire park access to the west along Broone Drive. Repair/upgrade buildings in the park, but maintain the existing rustic design and adopt as a vernacular for Norman. Replace restrooms, but keep stone character. Paint all metal rail and fences in the park.





Normandy Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

Address: 209 Westside Dr.

Sector: Southwest

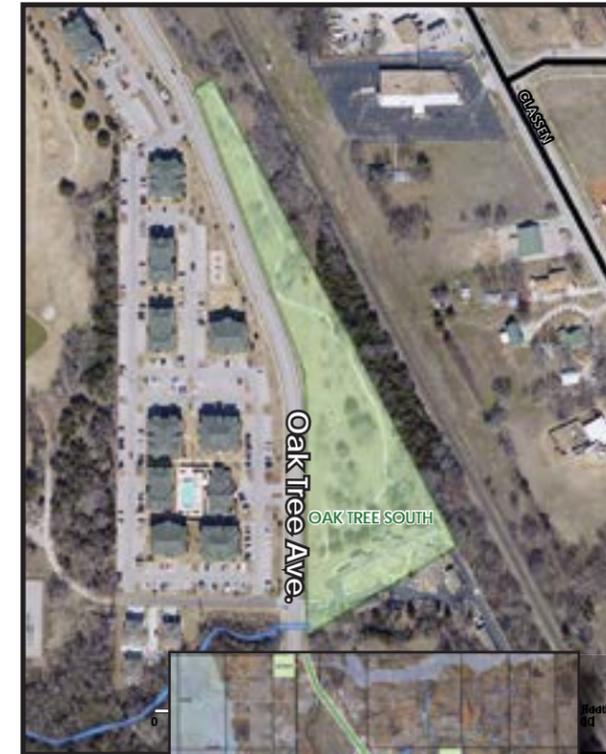
Size of Park: 2.4 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 1 Backstop
- ▶ 1/2 Basketball Court
- ▶ 1 Playground
- ▶ 1 Tennis Court
- ▶ 1 Volleyball Court
- ▶ 2 Benches
- ▶ 2 Picnic Tables
- ▶ 1 Bike Rack

Assessment of this park: This park has neighborhood streets on all sides and is very visible within the neighborhood. There is an ample amount of open space for unstructured recreation. The stone picnic table creates a signature feature within the park. The amenities in this park are all in good to excellent condition. This is a good example of a neighborhood park in Norman.

Key Needs: Monitor park condition. Upgrade or replace park sign.



Oak Tree South Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

Address: 2881 Oak Tree Ave.

Sector: Southwest

Size of Park: 4.8 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 0.48 Mile Walking/Jogging Trail
- ▶ Playground
- ▶ 2 Benches
- ▶ 1 Bike Rack

Assessment of this park: This park is located along a busy collector street with no parking or crosswalk. The park needs off-street parking added and the trail should be extended to Constitution St. The existing facilities are in good condition.

Key Needs: If feasible, add off-street parking. Explore option of extending park north to East Constitution Street (through purchase or easement) to provide a trail corridor. Extend the trail north as well.





Oakhurst Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park
Address: 1900 Oakhurst Ave.
Sector: Southeast
Size of Park: 2.1 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ Playground
- ▶ 1/2 Basketball Court
- ▶ 1 Picnic Table

Assessment of this park: The basketball pole and back board are in poor condition and are scheduled to be replaced. There is only one picnic area and a second should be added. The trees are in good condition and provide plenty of shade.

Key Needs: No immediate needs for this park. Monitor condition of park.



Pebblebrook Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park
Address: 2500 Overbrook Dr.
Sector: Southeast
Size of Park: 2.4 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 0.48 Mile Walking/Jogging Trail
- ▶ 1 Playground

Assessment of this park: This park is very hidden and has very poor access. The park is located behind homes and is only accessible by the trail. One would have to already know the park is there if wanting to use it. The amenities are in good condition. The adjacent detention pond near the park is owned by the St. James Neighborhood Association, but access to the trail is available to the general public.

Key Needs: No immediate needs for this park. When feasible, improve directional signage to the park.





Prairie Creek Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

Address: 2025 Pendleton Dr.

Sector: Northwest

Size of Park: 3.3 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 1 Backstop
- ▶ 1 Soccer Practice Field
- ▶ 1/2 Basketball Court
- ▶ 2 Playgrounds
- ▶ 1 Volleyball Court
- ▶ 2 Benches
- ▶ 2 Picnic Tables
- ▶ 1 BBQ Grill
- ▶ 1 Bike Rack
- ▶ 1 Drinking Fountain
- ▶ 1 Bridge

Assessment of this park: There are poles for a volleyball court in this park, but there is no net and designated court area. This park has abundant open space for unstructured recreation. The wooden benches are currently in good condition. The other amenities are all in good condition. This park is very visible from one major road in the neighborhood it serves. There are drainage corridors on two sides of the park.

Key Needs: Upgrade/replace sign. If not yet completed, create a loop walking trail in the park. Add a park sign on the east side of the park. Add a shade pavilion in the park.



Deerfield Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

Address: 2501 Queenston Ave.

Sector: Northeast

Size of Park: 2.4 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 1/2 Basketball Court
- ▶ 1 Playground
- ▶ 0.28 Mile Walking/Jogging Trail

Assessment of this park: The fall surface of the playground is adequate. The park is adjacent to a water feature which can attract people. The park has large street frontage on the north side next to the park amenities.

Key Needs: This is a new park. Blend adjacent detention area into the park. Over time, add a shade pavilion to the park.





Rotary Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park
Address: 1501 W. Boyd St.
Sector: Southwest
Size of Park: 5.6 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 2 Backstops
- ▶ 1 Soccer Practice Field
- ▶ 1 Playground
- ▶ 1 Baseball Field (lighted)
- ▶ 1 Tennis Court (lighted)
- ▶ 1 Volleyball Court
- ▶ 1 Pavilion
- ▶ 6 Benches
- ▶ 5 Picnic Tables
- ▶ 5 BBQ Grills
- ▶ 2 Drinking Fountains
- ▶ 1 Historical Structure
- ▶ Restrooms
- ▶ Parking
- ▶ 0.47 Mile Walking/Jogging Trail

Assessment of this park: The baseball field in this park is scheduled to be updated with new lights and fencing. The volleyball court is in poor condition. The other features of the park are in good condition; however they are tightly clustered into a small area at the back of the park. The basketball court has a new slab and two goals.

Key Needs: Enhance or replace park sign. Enhance park edges along Boyd Street and Wylie Road.



Royal Oaks Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park
Address: 430 Coalbrook Dr.
Sector: Southeast
Size of Park: 4.5 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 1.03 Mile Walking/Jogging Trail
- ▶ 1 Backstop
- ▶ 1 Soccer Practice Field
- ▶ 1/2 Basketball Court
- ▶ 1 Playground
- ▶ 1 Pavilion
- ▶ 4 Benches
- ▶ 2 Picnic Tables
- ▶ 2 BBQ Grills
- ▶ 1 Bike Rack
- ▶ 1 Drinking Fountain
- ▶ Water Feature/Pond (not part of City property)

Assessment of this park: There is a lake on one side of the park which separates it from half of the neighborhood. The asphalt trail leading to the lake is in poor condition. When replacing the trail, it should be widened to at least 6 feet. The amenities in this park are in good condition. This park has an abundant amount of open space but very few shade trees. Wood privacy fencing is unattractive and blocks views to pond/detention area.

Key Needs: Replace/upgrade park sign and pipe rail edge along Coalbrook Dr. Add landscaping and trees to eventually screen wooden fence along south edge of the park. Replace trail leading to the pond.





Russell Bates Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park
Address: 800 24th Ave. NW
Sector: Northwest
Size of Park: 6.7 undeveloped acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 1 Backstop
- ▶ 1 Practice Soccer Field
- ▶ 2 Small Pavilions
- ▶ 2 Picnic Tables
- ▶ 0.41 Mile Walking/Jogging Trail

Assessment of this park: This park is completely hidden and very inaccessible. The park serves as a detention area and is completely surrounded by commercial buildings on all sides. The only access is off 24th Ave. which is a very busy arterial road. There is no parking.

Key Needs: Create a stronger landscaped entry to the park with signage along 24th Avenue. Consider creating a small, highly landscaped area with pavement and a decorative pavilion that serves as an urban respite.



Ruth Updegraff Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park
Address: 505 N. Peters Ave.
Sector: Northeast
Size of Park: 0.3 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 1 Gazebo
- ▶ 5 Benches
- ▶ 1 Bike Rack
- ▶ 1 Bridge
- ▶ 1 Historical Structure (The City of Norman and The Cleveland County Historical Museum)

Assessment of this park: This is a small pocket park located at the intersection of three streets. The benches and gazebo are all in excellent condition. There is beautiful landscaping throughout this park site. Located across the street is the City of Norman and the Cleveland County Historical Museum. The structure is a historical home built in the 1890s which has been converted into the museum and is considered city park property.

Key Needs: Monitor wooden benches and replace/enhance as needed. Given the size and visual character of this park, consider adding landscape shrubbery and seasonal plantings, as well as stone seating walls.





Sequoyah Trail Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park
Address: 410 Sequoyah Trail
Sector: Northeast
Size of Park: 1.8 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 0.06 Mile Walking/Jogging Trail
- ▶ 1/2 Basketball Court
- ▶ 1 Playground
- ▶ 1 Gazebo
- ▶ 2 Picnic Tables
- ▶ 1 BBQ Grill

Assessment of this park: This park is adjacent to Woodcrest Creek. It is accessible from one major neighborhood street but is secluded behind homes. The amenities in the park are in good condition.

Key Needs: Incorporate decorative fencing to better define the park edges near adjacent homes. Replace or enhance the park sign.



Sonoma Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park
Address: 1432 Glen Ellen Circle
Sector: Northeast
Size of Park: 2.0 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 1 Backstop
- ▶ 1/2 Basketball Court
- ▶ 1 Playground
- ▶ 2 Benches
- ▶ 2 Picnic Tables
- ▶ 1 Drinking Fountain

Assessment of this park: This park is located at the back of the neighborhood it serves. It is only visible by one minor neighborhood street. The amenities in the park are in good condition.

Key Needs: Monitor park facilities and replace as needed.





Southlake Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

Address:
Sector: Southeast
Size of Park: 0.8 undeveloped acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ Undeveloped
- ▶ Water Feature/Detention Pond

Assessment of this park: Because this park is currently undeveloped, there is no assessment needed of the existing facilities.

Key Needs: Consider reconfiguring the park boundaries to create a stronger edge along Southlake Boulevard and along the lake. If feasible, acquire more lake frontage. This park has the potential to be comparable to the lake adjacent to Kevin Gottshall Park. Add a playground, pavilion, walking trails, and accessible parking when feasible.



Springbrook Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

Address: 816 Branchwood Dr.
Sector: Northwest
Size of Park: 2.9 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 1 Playground
- ▶ 1 Bench
- ▶ 1 Picnic Table
- ▶ 1 Bike Rack

Assessment of this park: This park only has access from one street, the rest of the park backs up to a creek. The wooden picnic table and bench are in poor condition. The fall surface around the playground is adequate with more mulch chips needing to be added. There currently is no fall surface around the swings. The guard rail designating the park boundary is rusted. The playground is in good condition.

Key Needs: Replace/upgrade park sign and the pipe rail edge fencing along Branchwood Drive. Address fall zone requirements immediately.





Summit Lakes Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park
Address: 3000 Summit Crossing Pkwy.
Sector: Southeast
Size of Park: 2.8 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 1/2 Basketball Court
- ▶ 1 Playground
- ▶ 1 Pavilion
- ▶ 1 Bench
- ▶ 4 Picnic Tables
- ▶ 1 Drinking Fountain

Assessment of this park: This park is located at the back of the neighborhood it serves with little visibility. The amenities are all in good condition. There is currently very little shade in this park; however several trees have been planted and are being irrigated automatically.

Key Needs: Shade. To address the need for shade, many trees have been planted.



Sunrise Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park
Address: 324 Skyline Dr.
Sector: Southeast
Size of Park: 2.4 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 1/2 Basketball Court
- ▶ 1 Playground
- ▶ 1 Picnic Table
- ▶ 1 BBQ Grill
- ▶ 1 Drinking Fountain
- ▶ 1 Sand Volleyball Court

Assessment of this park: The trash can and drinking fountain in this park are both in poor condition with severely chipped paint. The entire basketball court was replaced in 2009. The playground is in good condition. Visibility and access to this park is poor. The park is located off a cul-de-sac street with the fences of homes and an apartment complex surrounding it.

Key Needs: Add a shade pavilion when feasible. Replace older park infrastructure such as drinking fountain, trash cans and park sign.





Sutton Place Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

Address: 301 Sandpiper Ln.

Sector: Northeast

Size of Park: 2.1 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 1 Playground
- ▶ 4 Benches
- ▶ 3 Picnic Tables
- ▶ 1 Drinking Fountain

Assessment of this park: This park is located adjacent to a HOA swimming pool and amenity center. It is located in the center of the neighborhood it serves and is off one of the neighborhood collector streets. The amenities in this park are all in good to excellent condition.

Key Needs: Upgrade park sign and add a shade pavilion when feasible.



Tulls Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park

Address: 100 W. Vida Way

Sector: Northeast

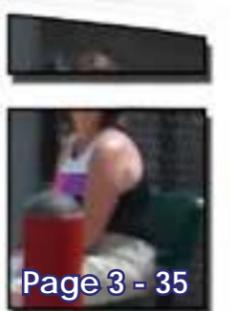
Size of Park: 2.4 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 1 Backstop
- ▶ 1 Playground
- ▶ 1 Pavilion
- ▶ 5 Benches
- ▶ 3 Picnic Tables

Assessment of this park: There are overhead powerlines that cross through the middle of this park and they should be buried. This park has very good visibility and is accessible from two major neighborhood streets. The benches and picnic tables are in adequate to poor condition and need replacing. This park is older and modern amenities should be added such as a walking trail, innovative playgrounds, and new tree plantings. The existing pavilion was designed in 2005 by OU architecture students as a class project to recycle road signs.

Key Needs: Replace aging benches in the park. Consider adding an architecturally prominent gazebo or pavilion as the centerpiece of this park.





Vineyard Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park
Address: 3111 Woodcrest Creek
Sector: Northeast
Size of Park: 4.8 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 1 Playground
- ▶ 1/2 Basketball Court
- ▶ 0.20 Mile Walking/Jogging Trail
- ▶ Picnic Tables
- ▶ Benches

Assessment of this park: This park is almost entirely inaccessible and is along a drainage channel.

Key Needs: As tracks to the east develop, pursue street frontage to alleviate a severe lack of visibility at the rear of the park.



Walnut Ridge Park

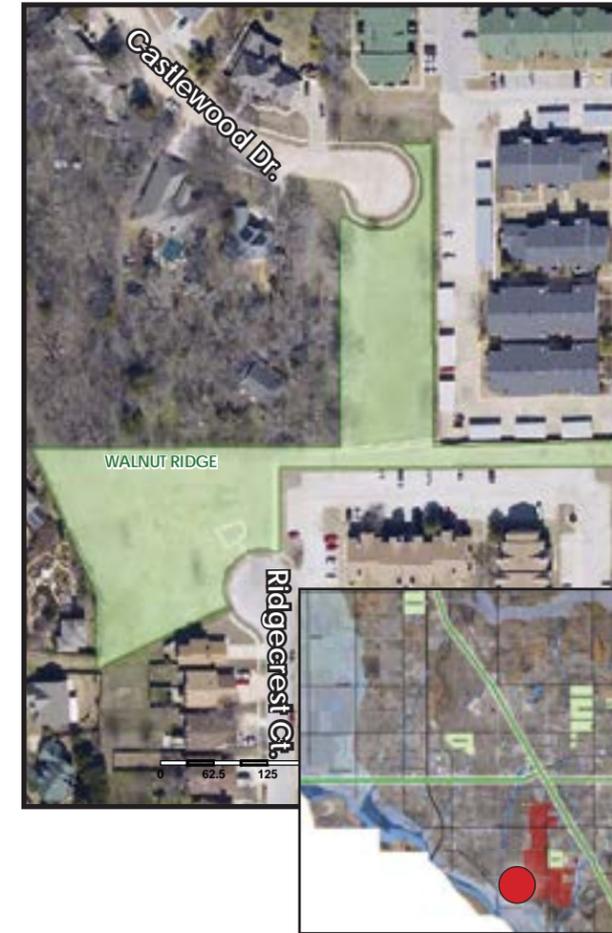
Type of Park: Neighborhood Park
Address: 3319 Walnut Rd.
Sector: Southwest
Size of Park: 2.0 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 1 Bench
- ▶ Swings
- ▶ 1 Bike Rack

Assessment of this park: There is no fall surface around the swings in this park. The facilities in the park are limited. A picnic pavilion should be added. There is access to the park from several neighborhood points. There is student housing directly around the park.

Key Needs: Address fall zone under swing set. Add a playground to the park.





Woodcreek Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park
Address: 1509 Concord Dr.
Sector: Southeast
Size of Park: 15.4 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 0.76 Mile Walking/Jogging Trail
- ▶ 1 Soccer Practice Field
- ▶ 3 Benches
- ▶ 1 Picnic Table
- ▶ 1 Playground
- ▶ 1 Backstop

Assessment of this park: The trail and benches are in good condition. The park site is wooded with mature trees. There are homes on multiple sides that limit access and visibility into the park. Woodcreek Park has an excellent trail that circles the park.

Key Needs: Update/replace park signs. Continue to monitor condition of facilities in the park.



Woodslawn Park

Type of Park: Neighborhood Park
Address: 1317 Regent St.
Sector: Northwest
Size of Park: 2.8 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 2 Backstops
- ▶ 1 Playground
- ▶ 2 Picnic Tables
- ▶ 1 Bike Rack
- ▶ 1 Pavilion
- ▶ 1 Practice Soccer Field

Assessment of this park: This park is completely surrounded by fences of homes that back up to it. It is only accessible by walking down what appears to be a maintenance alley. There is handicap access and parking at the elementary school leading to the western half of the park. It has no sign designating it as a public park. There is no visibility of this park and most people would not know it was there. There is no fall surface around the swings, and the fall surface of the playground has weeds growing out of it. The playground is in good condition. The stone picnic table is missing a seating bench on one side.

Key Needs: Address safety surface under swing sets. Replace stone picnic table.





Doubletree Greenbelt

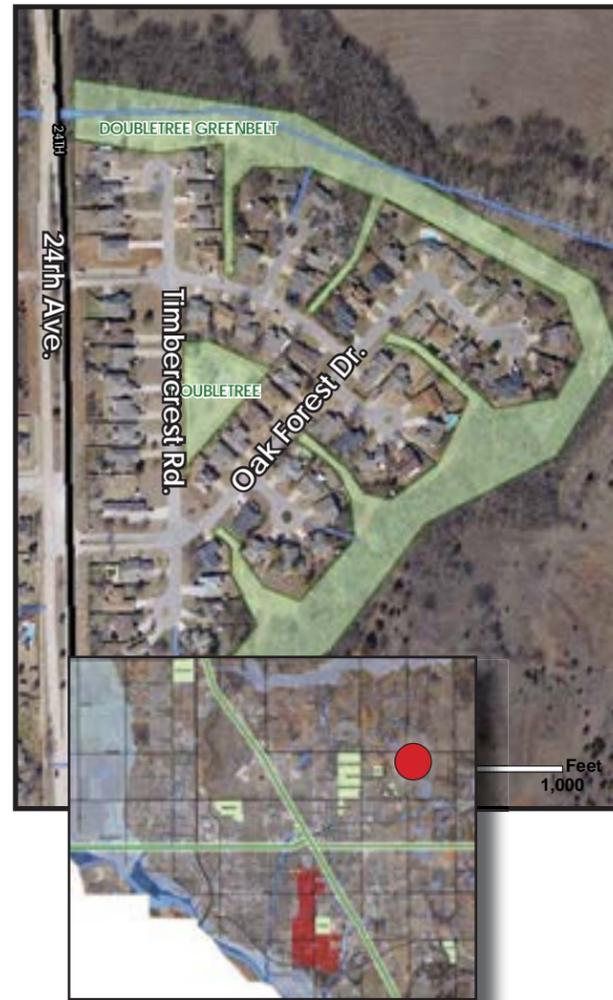
Type of Park: Linear Park
Address: 24th Ave. at Oak Forest
Sector: Northeast
Size of Park: 3.3 undeveloped acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ Undeveloped
- ▶ 0.56 Mile Walking/Jogging Trail

Assessment of this park: This greenbelt provides an open space buffer around the neighborhood it serves. Many of the homes back up to the greenbelt which creates added privacy for those lots. All the homes in this neighborhood have access to the greenbelt.

Key Needs: Monitor trail condition and repair as necessary.



Hall Park Greenbelt

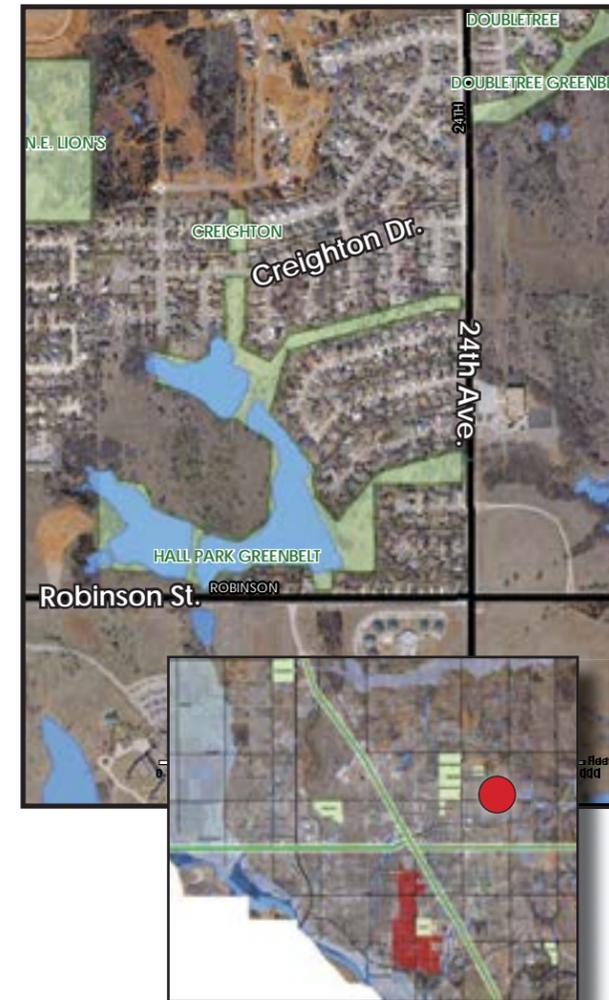
Type of Park: Linear Park
Address: 24th Ave. at Robinson St.
Sector: Northeast
Size of Park: 39.0 undeveloped acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ Undeveloped
- ▶ 0.33 Mile Walking/Jogging Trail
- ▶ Water Feature/Detention Pond

Assessment of this park: This greenbelt has large water pond/detention areas. There is limited visibility with this greenbelt and no access off of Robinson St. There are trail corridors that wind through some lots creating access to the greenbelt however most homes back up to it.

Key Needs: Monitor the trail surface and improve as necessary.





Legacy Trail

Type of Park: Linear Park
Address: From Hays St. to Duffy St.
Sector: Citywide
Size of Park: 8.2 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 1.38 Mile Walking/Jogging Trail
- ▶ 5 Historical Plazas
- ▶ Santa Fe Train Depot
- ▶ Public Art and Statues

Assessment this park: This is a trail that follows the railroad line through the middle of Norman. This is a signature project for the City and once complete, it will be a major trail spine for Norman. The concrete trail is in excellent condition. The trail has good street crossing markings and shade trees planted along both sides. It is important to continue to add benches and resting points along the trail.

Key Needs: Continue to aggressively expand the trail as feasible.



Duck Pond Park

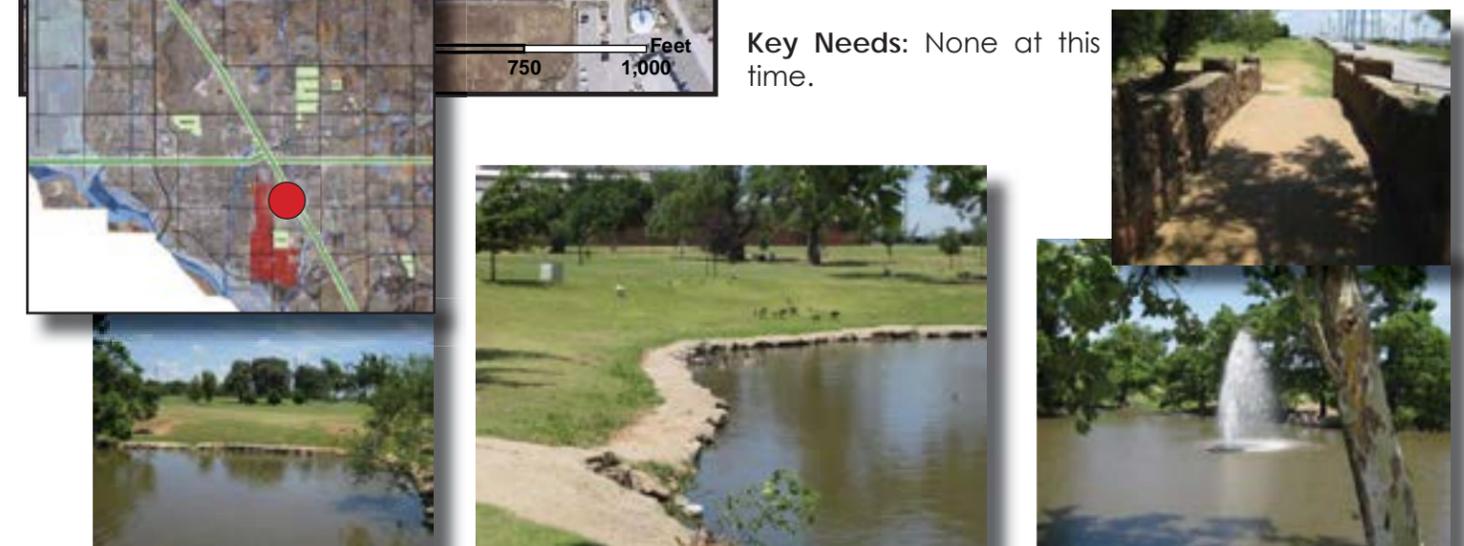
Type of Park: University Park
Ownership: University of Oklahoma
Address: Lindsey St.
Sector: Southwest
Size of Park: 23.8 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ Benches
- ▶ Historical Structure
- ▶ Water Feature/Pond
- ▶ Bridge
- ▶ Open Space

Assessment of this park: This park provides a quiet oasis in the heart of Norman, next to OU campus. Very few amenities are provided in the park and few are needed. Main concerns over the years will be the stabilization of the banks of the pond and the structural integrity of the bridge. The stone bridge vernacular in this park should be considered and duplicated in other major Norman parks.

Key Needs: None at this time.





12th Ave. Rec Center

Type of Park: Recreation Center
Address: 1701 12th Ave. NE
Sector: Northeast
Size of Park: 2.0 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ Gymnasium
- ▶ Gymnastics Room
- ▶ Game Room
- ▶ Kitchen
- ▶ Dance Studio
- ▶ 4 Outdoor Tennis Courts

Assessment of this recreation center (park areas only):

Outdoor areas around this center are shared with the elementary school. As a result, the center has limited City owned property with which to develop play areas, play fields or other facilities which might complete the center.

Key Needs: Pursue land trade with Norman Public Schools to consolidate land near the 12th Avenue Center. Develop a play field and a playground near the center.

Indoor Components: See Chapter 7.



Irving Rec Center

Type of Park: Recreation Center
Address: 125 Vicksburg Ave.
Sector: Southeast
Size of Park: 1.7 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ Gymnasium
- ▶ After School Rooms
- ▶ 4 Outdoor Basketball Courts

Assessment of this recreation center (park areas only):

Courts are separated from the indoor center, and for all practical purposes are parts of the middle school.

Key Needs: Provide signage that identifies courts as being a park and announces hours of usage (that do not interfere with school operations).

Indoor Components: See Chapter 7.





Senior Citizen Center

Type of Park: Recreation Center

Address: 329 South Peters Ave.

Sector: Southeast

Size of Park: 0.6 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ Kitchen/Cafeteria
- ▶ Arts and Crafts Room
- ▶ Activity Room
- ▶ Dance Area
- ▶ Tax Preparation Room

Assessment of this center (outdoor areas only): The Senior Center is adjacent to June Benson Park, which is described on Page 3-23.

Key Needs: Maintain outdoor landscaping and walks around Senior Center.

Indoor Components: See Chapter 7.



Whittier Rec Center

Type of Park: Recreation Center

Address: 2000 W. Brooks st.

Sector: Southwest

Size of Park: 1.5 developed acres

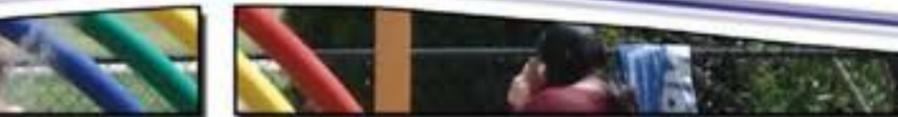
Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ Gymnasium
- ▶ After School Rooms
- ▶ 4 Tennis Courts
- ▶ 2 Basketball Courts

Assessment of this recreation center (park areas only): The Whittier Center includes four outdoor tennis/multipurpose courts. These courts are behind the recreation center building.

Key Needs: Add sign directing residents to available courts (during non-school hours). Renovate courts with Norman Public Schools when feasible.

Indoor Components: See Chapter 7.





Andrews Park

Type of Park: Community Park
Address: 201 W. Daws St.
Sector: Northwest
Size of Park: 17.5 developed acres

has been given to lowering a portion of the park to create a storm water detention basin. The area under consideration is the northwest corner of the park, and would be lowered by four to six inches, but could still be used as practice fields. No decision has been made as to the use of the park for this purpose yet.

Key Needs: Add to the park by removing a portion of North Webster Avenue just north of West Daws Street. This would allow a one acre triangle of land that is currently surrounded by roads to be physically incorporated into the park. Continue to add trees to the park to increase the availability of shade. Add additional outdoor sculptural displays in the park to reinforce the park's identity as the cultural center of Norman. Add stone features throughout the park that continue the character established by the WPA components.

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 1.24 Mile Walking/Jogging Trail
- ▶ 3 Backstops
- ▶ 2 and 1/2 Basketball Courts (2 are lighted)
- ▶ 3 Playgrounds
- ▶ 1 Skate Park
- ▶ 1 Splash Pad Area
- ▶ 1 Amphitheater
- ▶ 1 Pavilion
- ▶ 1 Gazebo
- ▶ 40 Benches
- ▶ 17 Picnic Tables
- ▶ 3 BBQ Grills
- ▶ 1 Bike Rack
- ▶ 3 Drinking Fountains
- ▶ 7 Bridges
- ▶ 1 Historical Structure
- ▶ Parking
- ▶ Restrooms Building
- ▶ WPA Stone Channel

Assessment of this park: Andrews Park is the best known park in Norman. It is heavily used for walking, enjoying the popular splash pad, for baseball and soccer practice, for skateboarding, and for major events. While under 18 acres in size, the park's prominent downtown location makes it easily accessible from all parts of the City. The historic WPA channel and the stone amphitheater are unique features that set the park apart from others in the system. The park also has many mature trees that provide shade. Consideration





Little Axe Park and Community Center

Type of Park: Community Park/Special Purpose

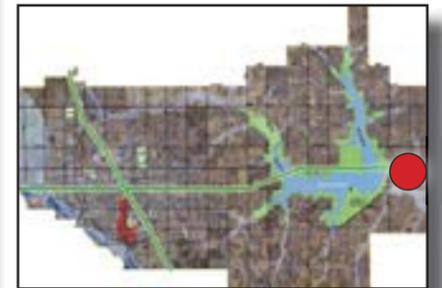
Address: 1000 168th Ave. NE

Sector: Southeast

Size of Park: 14.2 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ Playground
- ▶ Swings
- ▶ Community Center Building
- ▶ 3 Baseball Fields
- ▶ 2.5 Basketball Courts (2 on parking lot)
- ▶ Disc Golf Course
- ▶ 1 Bike Rack
- ▶ 1 Bench
- ▶ 4 Picnic Tables
- ▶ Parking
- ▶ 1 Restroom Building/Concession



Assessment of this park: This park is located in the very far east portion of the City by Lake Thunderbird. This park and community building serves all the residents who live in the rural eastern part of City. The park is located on 168th Avenue East and has good access off Highway 9. Park amenities are in good condition. Additional shade trees and picnic areas around the baseball fields should be considered.

Key Needs: Improve concession building serving the athletic fields, and improve the sidewalk accessibility throughout the park.





Griffin Park

Type of Park: Community Park
Address: 1001 E. Robinson
Sector: Northeast
Size of Park: 160.0 developed acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 1.16 Mile Walking/Jogging Trail
- ▶ 1 Playground
- ▶ 16 Soccer Fields
- ▶ 9 Baseball Fields
- ▶ 5 Softball Fields
- ▶ 4 Football Fields
- ▶ 1 Dog Park
- ▶ 3 Pavilions
- ▶ 15 Picnic Tables
- ▶ 1 BBQ Grills
- ▶ 1 Bike Rack
- ▶ Water Feature/Irrigation Lake
- ▶ Parking
- ▶ 4 Restrooms Buildings
- ▶ Disc Golf Course

Assessment of this park: Griffin Park is by far the most actively used park in the Norman parks system. When combined with the adjacent Sutton Wilderness area, Griffin provides more than 300 acres of active and passive parkland in the very center of the City. The park also includes four football fields that are used for Norman's growing youth football leagues. While the park is well used, it needs to be enhanced to truly stand out as one of Norman's premier parks. The baseball fields and surrounding fencing are generally in good condition, and the soccer fields are well maintained. Lighting has been recently added and is in good condition.

Key Needs: The park has no additional room for expansion of its two primary uses, soccer and baseball/softball. Soccer is an extremely popular sport in the City, and the soccer complex in the park hosts many local and regional soccer tournaments that have been very successful. Use of the park for higher level, premier tournaments

is precluded by the number of fields, and consideration should be given to identifying where nearby growth might occur.

Other key needs include:

- ▶ Replace decades old pipe railing around the park and internal parking areas. Suggested treatments may include using simulated wood concrete fencing or landscaped berms around the park perimeter.
- ▶ Replace aging signs at the park entries and at key facility entrances within the park. Signs should adapt the vernacular of the stone pavilions already existing in the park.
- ▶ New wayfinding and feature identification signs are needed within the park. This park is large enough to have a unique set of internal signs that guide visitors to the park.
- ▶ Shade is needed over bleachers in the park, at both the soccer complex and at the baseball/softball fields. One to two fields per every quad should be covered.
- ▶ Resurface or replace the 1+ mile trail around the park. The asphalt trail surface is deteriorating and cracking in some areas.
- ▶ The park needs at least two additional playgrounds. One is needed near the soccer area pavilion, while the second is needed at the northeastern corner of the park along 12th Avenue.
- ▶ The dog park needs new fence posts and area amenities. These might include fake fire hydrants and dog slides, as well as potential additional shade for pet owners.
- ▶ The play area near the softball fields needs to be expanded/enhanced.
- ▶ The pavilion near the existing play area is dated, and should be replaced with a pavilion that matches the stone vernacular used in the more attractive pavilions on the site.
- ▶ Internal landscaping and additional tree planting needs to be added along main promenades and trail corridors between fields.
- ▶ A basketball complex has been proposed in the northeastern quadrant of the City. The park currently has no basketball courts.
- ▶ Add shade and additional paved seating areas adjacent to the concession buildings in the park. Shade could be provided by using pergolas or large covered pavilions.





John H. Saxon Park

Type of Park: Community Park
Address: Highway 9 at 36th Ave.
Sector: Southeast
Size of Park: 67.3 undeveloped acres

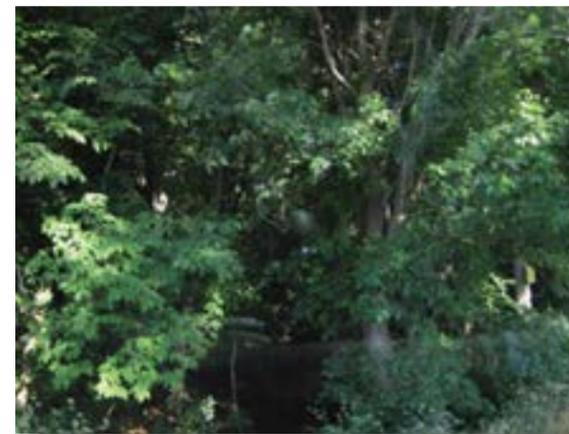
Existing Facilities in the Park:
 ► Undeveloped

Assessment of this park: Saxon Park is currently undeveloped. It is located in the southeast sector of the City along Highway 9 and SE 36th Avenue.

The park site is a mixture of mature woodlands and open fields.

Key Needs: Develop a master plan for the park site. As the key community park for the fast growing southeast sector of the City, careful consideration should be given to balancing both passive and active recreation facilities. Consideration should also be given to allow indoor recreation and aquatic buildings to be located in this park.

The City currently plans to add walking/jogging trails which will accommodate cross country competitions. Some clearing for these trails has been initiated.





Reaves Park

Type of Park: Community Park

Address: 2501 Jenkins Ave.

Sector: Southeast

Size of Park: 79.8 acres developed

losses in this park. The City's Veteran's Memorial Plaza is a recent addition to the park. Kids Place, a Robert Eather's designed wooden complex that was built in 1999, is the City's largest playground and a central feature of the park. A 10' wide asphalt trail that is in good condition circles the park.

A large picnic complex located in the park is somewhat dated, with older pavilions, picnic tables and restroom facilities.

Key Needs: Consider creating a new master plan for the park. Rebuild the picnic complex, with new tables, pavilions and restroom building. Use the pavilion vernacular found in Griffin and Andrews Park to create a character that links Reaves back to those other parks. Add multiple new park signs to identify the park as a City of Norman facility. Install cultural components such as additional outdoor art, commemoration markers or statues, and a place for large gatherings. Create new park entrances that celebrate the park. Continue to upgrade athletic field lighting in the park, and ensure that concession/restroom facilities at the softball and baseball fields are tournament quality.

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ 0.86 Mile Walking/Jogging Trail
- ▶ 1 Backstop
- ▶ 3 Playgrounds
- ▶ 6 Baseball Fields
- ▶ 6 Softball Fields
- ▶ 4 Volleyball Courts
- ▶ 4 Pavilions
- ▶ 3 Benches
- ▶ 71 Picnic Tables
- ▶ 10 BBQ Grills
- ▶ 1 Bike Rack
- ▶ 3 Drinking Fountains
- ▶ 1 Historical Structure (Veterans Memorial)
- ▶ Parking
- ▶ Restrooms Building
- ▶ 1 Basketball Court
- ▶ 1 Recreation/Dance Center

Assessment of this park: Reaves is home to both softball and baseball facilities operated by the Reaves Park Softball Association and by the Optimist Club. It is 80 acres in size and is the City's third most popular park. However, the park is surrounded by the University of Oklahoma campus, and as such, is easily confused as being part of OU. The park has many mature trees, but recent ice storms have resulted in severe tree





Ruby Grant Park

Type of Park: Community Park
Address: Franklin Rd. at I-35
Sector: Northwest
Size of Park: 148.8 undeveloped acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ Undeveloped

Assessment of this park: This park is currently undeveloped. There is a master plan for this park which includes practice fields, a cross country track facility, a splash pad, playgrounds, disc golf course, trails, picnic areas, sculpture garden, skate park, dog park, and a pond.

Key needs: Establish a strategy to acquire the funding necessary for construction of the first phase (as per the established master plan for the site).





George M. Sutton Wilderness

Type of Park: Special Purpose Park (Open Space)

Address: 1920 12th Ave. NE
Sector: Northeast
Size of Park: 160.0 undeveloped acres

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ Access Parking Area Adjacent to 12th Avenue
- ▶ Small Pavilion at Entry Area
- ▶ Park Information Kiosk
- ▶ 2 Ponds/Water Features
- ▶ 3+ Miles of Nature Trails
- ▶ Extensive Forested Areas

Assessment of this park: The Sutton Wilderness is the largest natural preserve in Norman, beyond lands around Lakes Thunderbird. It occupies a central and easily accessible location in the City. One parking area focuses entry at a single point, allowing some control over access to the preserve.

The preserve itself is very scenic, with winding forested trails leading to two lakes in the center of the preserve. A recent 50+ acre addition along the western edge of the preserve was acquired, and integrated wetlands and forested areas into the preserve.

Key Needs: Trails within the park are all rustic and natural, and are not wheelchair accessible. Also, emergency access to the center area of the preserve is limited. Develop at least one more accessible route to the larger lake. The lakes have no fishing piers or wildlife observation blinds. Finally the park edge should include some signage or features that identify the site as a natural preserve, especially at Rock Creek Road and 12 Avenue.





Westwood Park

Type of Park: Special Purpose Park
Address: 2400 Westport Dr.
Sector: Northwest
Size of Park: 129.9 developed acres

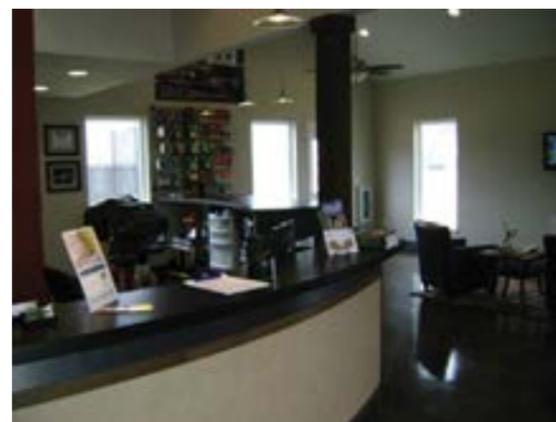
Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ Walking/Jogging Trail
- ▶ 12 Tennis Courts
- ▶ Tennis Pro Shop
- ▶ 18 Hole Golf Course
- ▶ Driving Range
- ▶ Golf Pro Shop
- ▶ Swimming Pool/Aquatic Complex
- ▶ Paved Parking Lot
- ▶ Restroom Building
- ▶ 1 Playground

Assessment of this park: This park is largely a destination park. The golf course and tennis complex are in good condition. The restrooms, concessions, and golf pro shop need renovation. The swimming pool is very dated and in need of replacement (recommendations regarding the pool are discussed in Chapter 6). There is one playground in the park which is in good condition; however it is not often used and has limited visibility.

Key Needs: Replace or renovate the Westwood Pool. As part of that effort, develop a master plan for the remaining facilities in the park, including the Tennis Center and the Golf Course Clubhouse. Consider consolidating tennis center and golf course building in one building to create space for a two to four covered tennis court building. Consider also re-configuring parking for greater efficiency and to create usable space.

Create a new entrance to the park from Robinson Street. Add features such as pavilions and a connection to the existing Robinson Street trail that also allow this park to serve as a neighborhood park for nearby residents. Add prominent public art pieces in this highly used park.





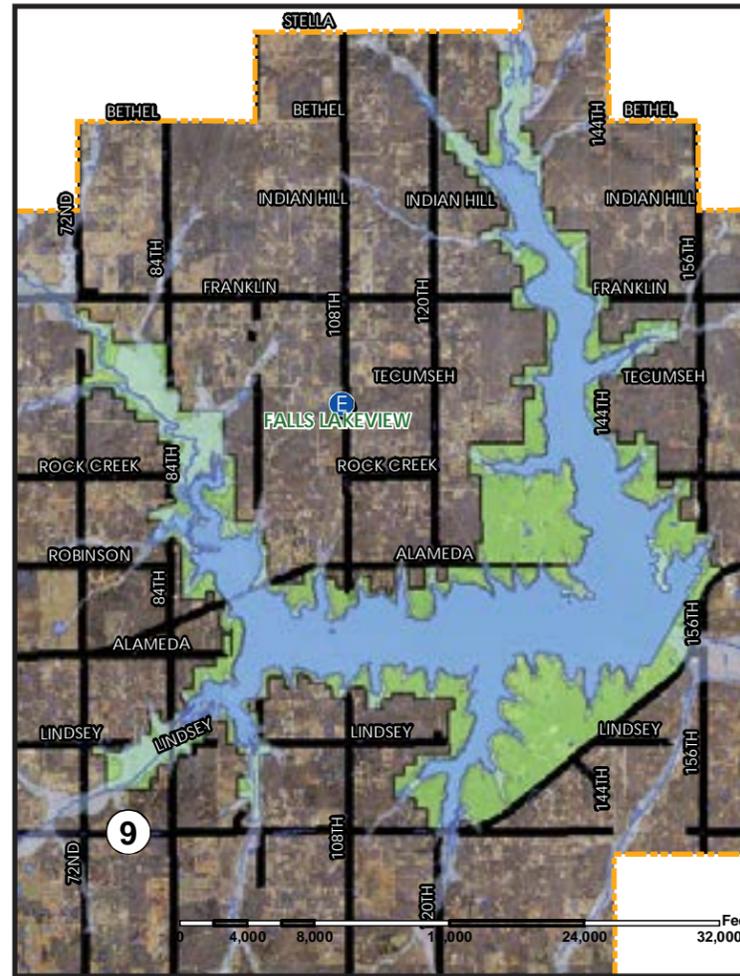
Lake Thunderbird State Park (State of Oklahoma)

Type of Park: Regional Park

Ownership: State of Oklahoma
Address: 13001 Alameda Dr.
Sector: East
Size of Park: 1,874 developed acres of parkland plus 5,497 acres of water (lake surface area) and 5,244 acres of additional open space surrounding the lake.

Existing Facilities in the Park:

- ▶ Marina with Rentals and Gift Shop
- ▶ Swimming Beach
- ▶ Paddle Boat and Canoe Rentals
- ▶ 447 Campsites
- ▶ 8 Lake Huts
- ▶ Hike and Bike Nature Trails
- ▶ Horse Stables
- ▶ Restrooms Building/Showers
- ▶ Picnic Areas
- ▶ Group Shelters
- ▶ Nature Center
- ▶ Restaurant
- ▶ Hunting Areas
- ▶ Archery Range
- ▶ Playgrounds
- ▶ Miniature Golf



Assessment of this park: This regional park is owned and operated as a State Park and Lake Thunderbird is Norman's primary water source. The park serves not only the City of Norman but the surrounding communities. Long term, the City should develop trails along the Little River corridor and Highway 9 to connect residents to the lake through an alternative form of transportation.

Key Needs: Suggest improvements and potential partnerships where appropriate to enhance park facilities.





Chapter 4

Public Input



Chapter 4

Public Input

Introduction

Public input is a critical part of any planning process. Public entities work for their citizens by managing and providing the types of facilities that the residents, as taxpayers, want. In essence, our citizens are our "customers" and it is the City's responsibility to provide what our customers seek. In the parks planning process, citizen input helps identify what types of existing facilities are being used, where key deficiencies may occur, and where the citizens of Norman would like to see their funding targeted. This input also can be compared to input received from other cities in nearby regions of the country, so that long term trends can be identified. In essence, the residents of a community determine what they want to have in their city through their current use of those facilities, and through their comments and input.

This master plan incorporates an extensive amount of public input, utilizing several alternative methods. By using these methods of public input, feedback from many varying parts of the community were received, leading to a broader consensus on the direction that the master plan should take. The multiple methods that were used to generate citizen input during the planning process, as well as the number of responses generated with each method, include:

- ▶ A citywide mail-out survey (500+ responses)
- ▶ An online survey (1,000+ responses)
- ▶ Surveys distributed to the young residents of Norman in the Norman Public Schools (2,050+ responses)
- ▶ Interviews with key stakeholders, staff and elected officials of the City (15+ interviews)
- ▶ Periodic reviews and feedback from the Master Plan Steering Committee
- ▶ Citywide open house/public meeting and displays (44 completed questionnaires)

Citizen Mail-out Survey

Why use a mail-out survey - A citywide mail-out survey was conducted as part of the parks and recreation planning process. The survey was designed to examine residents' current participation in recreational activities, and it also helped to assess recreational needs in Norman. The survey allows elected officials and City staff to better understand the recreational needs and desires of its citizenry. The survey was conducted by a professional public input firm with extensive experience in recreation attitude surveys.

Survey methodology - 5,000 mail-out surveys were sent to randomly selected homes in Norman and equally distributed throughout each sector of the City. Approximately 10% or 500+ completed surveys were returned. For the mail-out survey, which is used as a measuring stick for comparison with the other methods, the results yield a 95% level of confidence with a precision of +/- 5%. Respondents were asked to indicate which sector of the city they live in, so that responses could be tied to a particular area of the City.

Online Survey

All citizens in Norman were given the opportunity to log onto the City's website and take a survey pertaining to parks and recreation. The survey was modeled after the mail-out survey with similar questions to allow for comparison. The reason for an online survey was to give all residents a broad based opportunity to voice their opinions.

Over the next several pages, the results of the mail-out survey and the online survey are shown and compared. Cumulative results of all surveys can be found in the appendix of this Master Plan. Some questions were also compared to the results of a broader citizen satisfaction survey conducted by the City of Norman in July 2009. Where relevant, those results are referenced.





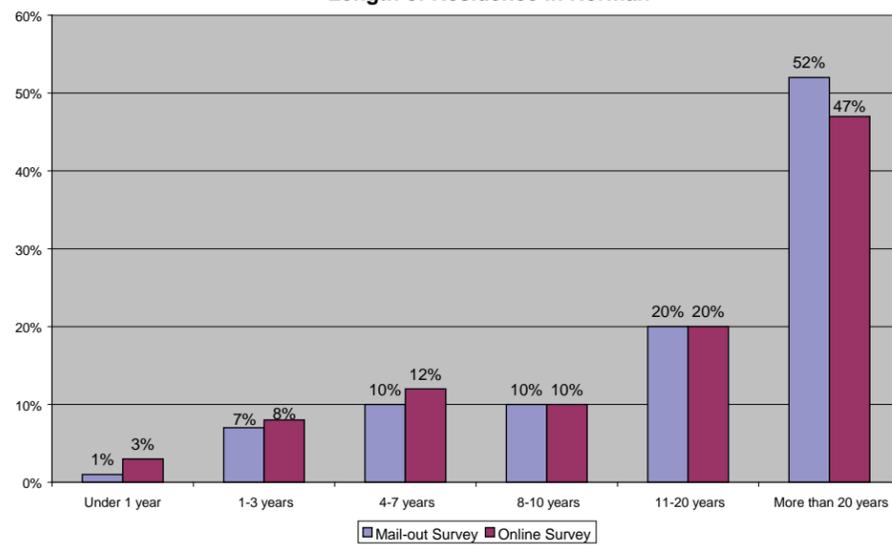
Demographics of Survey Respondents

When survey respondents were asked how long they had **lived in Norman**, 52% of the mail-out survey respondents and 47% of the online survey participants indicated that they have lived in Norman for more than 20 years. Additionally, nearly three-fourths of mail-out survey respondents have lived in Norman for more than 10 years (72%), as had 67% of the online respondents. These results are mirrored by responses to the City's broader survey. Norman has a significant and large core population of long time residents.

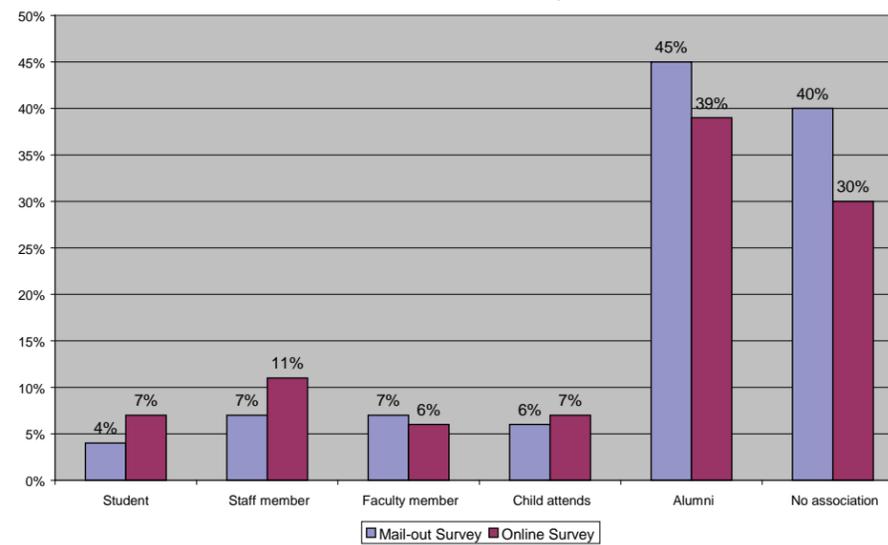
Not surprisingly, when asked about their **association with the University of Oklahoma**, 60% of the mail-out survey respondents and 70% of the online survey participants had some type of association. On this question the respondents were asked to choose all that apply to them. Most respondents who were associated with the University were alumni. The results are shown in the bar graph below.

Age of Respondents' Children - Given that a large portion of the survey respondents have lived in Norman for over 20 years, it is not surprising that a large portion also indicated that they no longer have dependent children living at home. The responses are shown below of those who have children under the age of 18 living at home. The online survey was open to all residents and clearly attracted more respondents with a greater interest in parks and recreation needs targeting younger children.

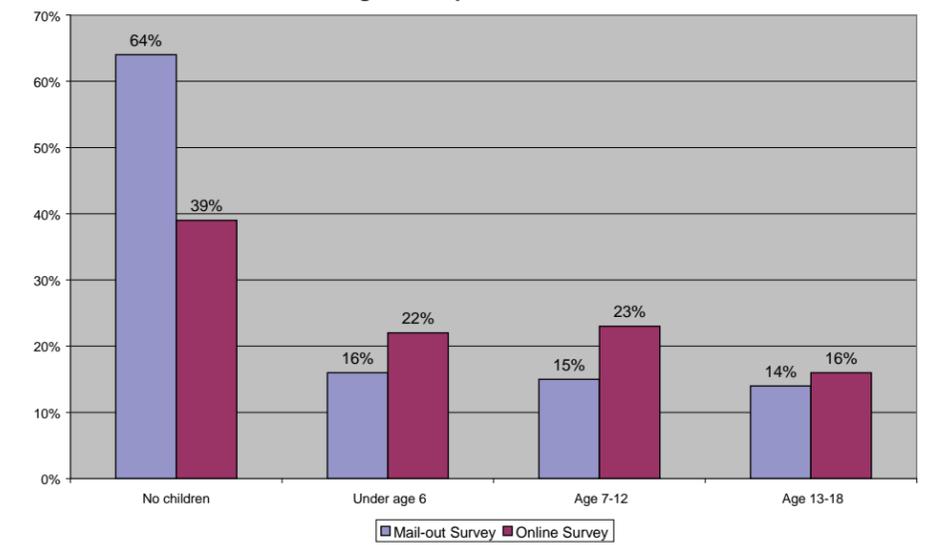
Length of Residence in Norman



Association with the University of Oklahoma



Age of Respondents Children





Most Frequently Visited Park

Residents were asked what park in Norman they most frequently visit. Only a few of the 65 parks in the City received any mention. The responses are listed below.

Mail-out Survey		Online Survey	
Andrews Park	57%	Andrews Park	26%
Reaves Park	47%	Reaves Park	23%
Lions Park	21%	Lions Park	13%
Griffin Park	8%	Westwood Park	7%
Brookhaven Park	7%	Griffin Park	6%
Westwood Park	3%	Brookhaven Park	3%

What Do You Generally Do When Visiting a Park

The survey respondents were given a list of various park activities. They were then asked to choose all the activities they generally do when they go to a city park. The responses are shown below.

Mail-out Survey		Online Survey	
Enjoy the outdoors	70%	Enjoy the outdoors	16%
Walk/hike	60%	Take kids to play	15%
Take kids to play	51%	Walk/hike	14%
Picnic	37%	Special events	11%
Walk pets	31%	Picnic	10%
Bike	19%	Walk pets	8%
Take kids to org. sports	18%	Take kids to org. sports	6%
Swim	16%	Swim	6%
Non-organized sports	11%	Bike	5%
Organized sports	6%	Non-organized sports	3%
Don't go to parks	5%	Organized sports	2%

Reasons for Visiting Those Parks

Next, the residents were asked the open-ended question of what they feel is their biggest reason for visiting those parks. Their responses are shown below.

Mail-out Survey		Online Survey	
Events/concerts/festivals	23%	Locations/close/proximity	21%
Take kids to play	18%	Events/concerts/festivals	18%
Location/close/proximity	16%	Take kids to play	15%
Walk/jog/run/walk dogs	14%	Golf/disc golf	8%
Atmosphere/beauty/clean	5%	Splash pad/water park	6%



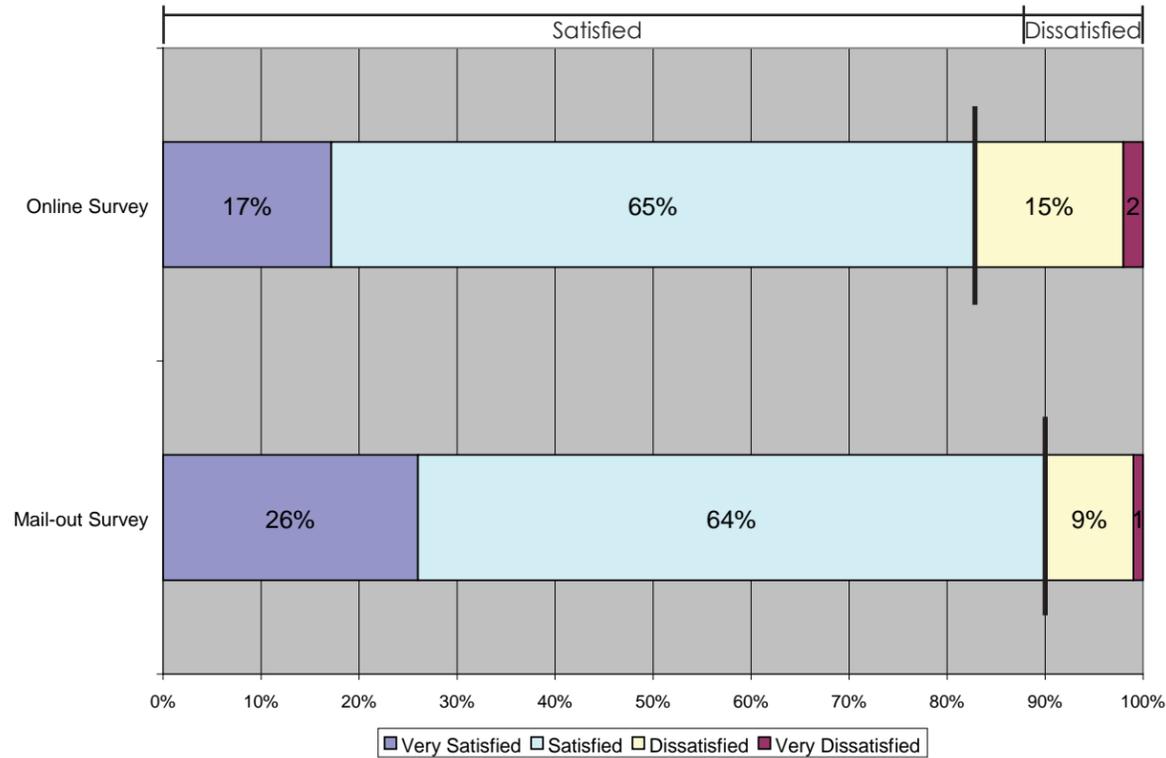


Quality of Parks and Recreation in Norman

A key question in the survey asks residents how satisfied or dissatisfied they are with the overall quality of parks and recreation. This establishes a baseline of citizen perceptions. The same question can be asked on future surveys to determine whether the City's park system has increased or decreased in quality according to the residents.

Norman has a very high level of citizen satisfaction with the overall parks system. 90% of those who responded to the mail-out survey and 82% of those who participated in the online survey indicated they were either very satisfied or satisfied with the quality of parks and recreation in Norman.

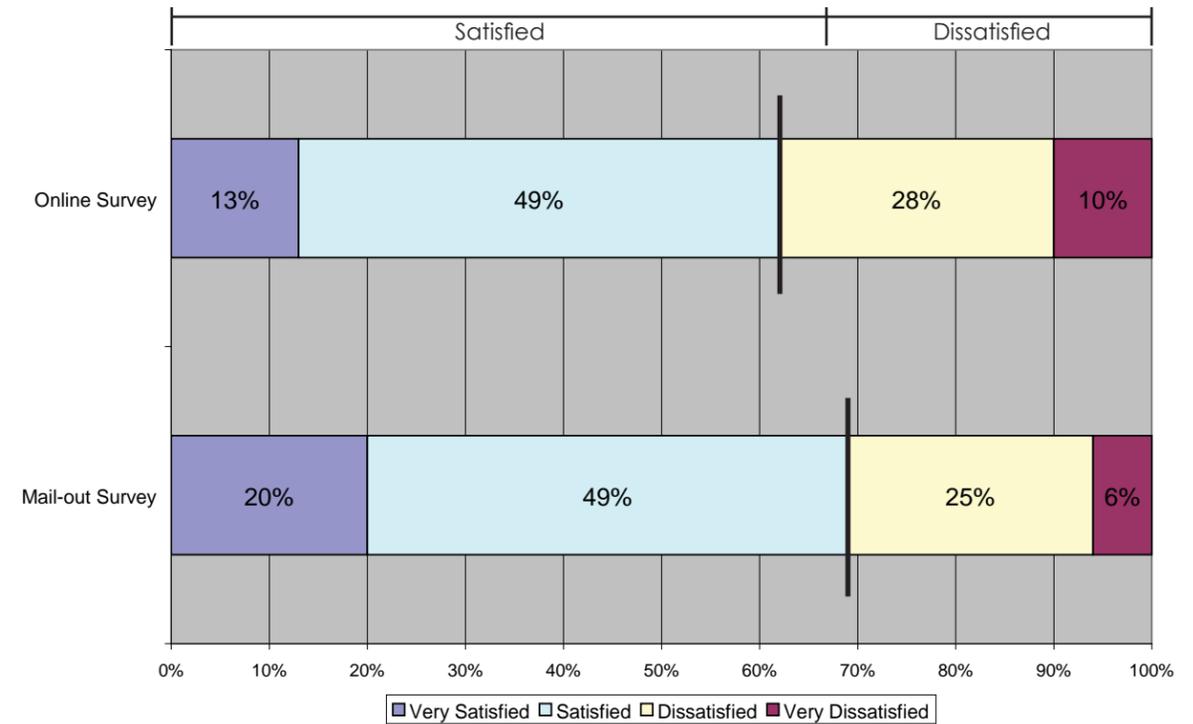
Satisfaction with the Quality of Parks and Recreation in Norman



Quality of Parks and Recreation in Your Neighborhood

Residents were then asked how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with the overall quality of parks and recreation in their specific neighborhood. The percentage of people satisfied was much lower when compared to the City as a whole. Only 69% of the mail-out survey respondents and 62% of the online survey respondents were either very satisfied or satisfied with the parks and recreation in their neighborhood. This indicates that while people feel that the overall quality of all parks in Norman is high, residents feel that their smaller, neighborhood parks are not as high a quality.

Satisfaction with Quality of Parks and Recreation in Your Neighborhood

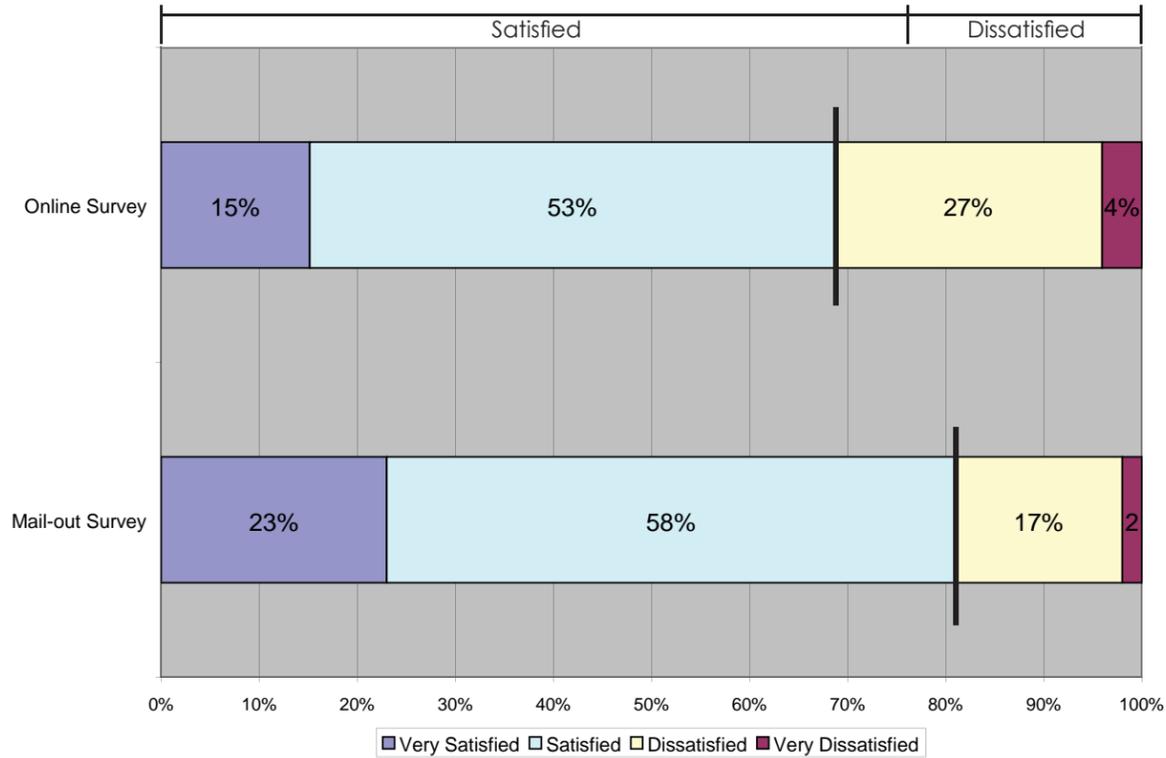




Amount of Recreational Opportunities

Residents were also asked how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with the amount of recreational opportunities provided by the City of Norman. 81% of mail-out survey respondents indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied. However only 68% of the online survey participants indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied.

Satisfaction with Amount of Recreational Opportunities



Favorite RECREATIONAL Activity

In an open-ended question, residents were asked what their favorite recreational activity was, as well as the favorite activity of their spouse and their children. In both the mail-out survey and the online survey, the highest rated response was walking/hiking for both themselves and their spouses. This matches the expressed desire later in the surveys for additional trails throughout the entire City for recreation and exercise. Swimming, golf and biking also ranked as favorite activities. The responses in both surveys are shown below.

Mail-out Survey

Yourself

1) Walking/hiking	36%
2) Biking	8%
3) Swimming	8%
4) Golf	7%
5) Jogging/running	7%
6) Spectator events	7%
7) Aerobics/weight lifting	6%
8) Team sports	5%
9) Fishing/hunting	5%

Your Spouse

1) Walking/hiking	33%
2) Golf	10%
3) Biking	8%
4) Fishing/hunting	7%
5) Jogging/running	7%
6) Aerobics/weight lifting	6%
7) Team sports	6%
8) Arts & crafts/gardening	5%

Your Children

1) Playgrounds	29%
2) Swimming	17%
3) Sports	9%
4) Softball/baseball	8%
5) Soccer	7%
6) Walking/hiking	5%
7) Basketball	5%

Online Survey

Yourself

1) Walking/hiking	29%
2) Swimming	15%
3) Golf	11%
4) Biking	7%
5) Jogging/running	7%
6) Aerobics/weight lifting	7%
7) Team sports	5%

Your Spouse

1) Walking/hiking	26%
2) Golf	10%
3) Swimming	9%
4) Team sports	9%
5) Biking	9%
6) Jogging/running	8%
7) Aerobics/weight lifting	8%

Your Children

1) Walking/hiking	26%
2) Golf	10%
3) Swimming	9%
4) Team sports	9%
5) Biking	9%
6) Jogging/running	8%
7) Aerobics/weight lifting	8%





Organizations Utilized to Participate in Activities

After listing their favorite recreational activities, residents were asked to check which organization they utilize when participating in those activities. The responses are shown below. The number one response for both surveys was City of Norman indicating that residents use City facilities for a large portion of their recreational activities.

Mail-out Survey

1) City of Norman	61%
2) State Park/Lake Thunderbird	41%
3) University of Oklahoma	32%
4) Churches	31%
5) Norman Public Schools	24%
6) YMCA	24%
7) Private Clubs	19%
8) Other	14%
9) Non-profit Youth	9%

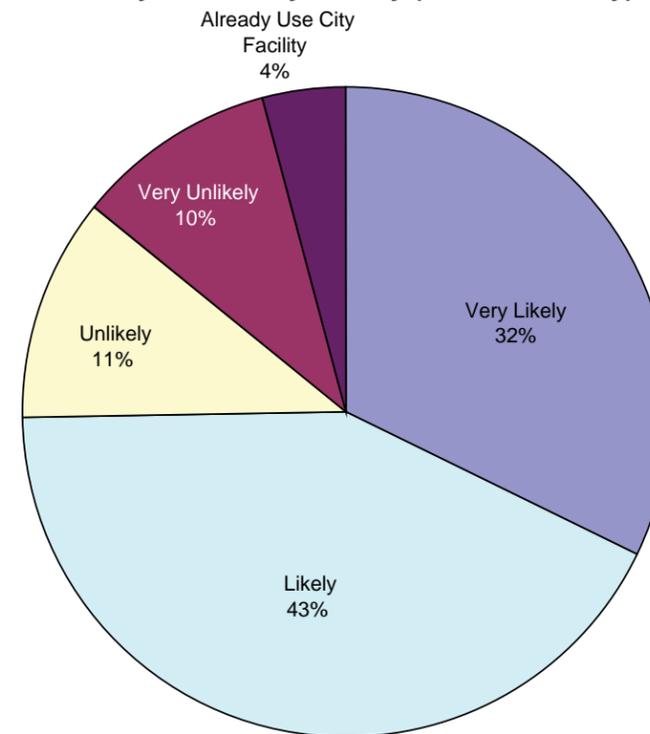
Online Survey

1) City of Norman	24%
2) State Park/Lake Thunderbird	13%
3) University of Oklahoma	13%
4) Norman Public Schools	12%
5) YMCA	11%
6) Churches	10%
7) Private Clubs	8%
8) Other	5%
9) Non-profit Youth	4%

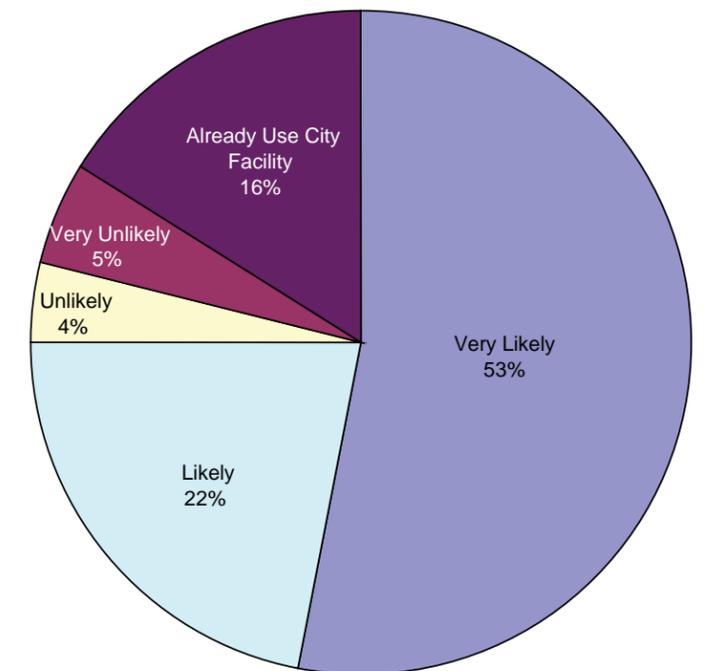
Likelihood of Using a City Facility

The residents of Norman were then asked how likely or unlikely they would be to participate in their favorite recreational activities in a city facility if the City provided such a state of the art facility. 75% of both the mail-out survey and online survey respondents indicated they would be likely or very likely to use the City facility. Such a high level of likelihood is to be expected when compared to the previous question which showed that City facilities are the most likely utilized facilities when participating in a recreational activity. Citizens indicated a tendency to support and utilize City facilities.

Likely to Use City Facility (Mail-out Survey)



Likely to Use City Facility (Online Survey)





Favorite ATHLETIC Activity

Residents were given a list of popular athletic activities. They were then asked to choose their favorite activity. The responses are shown below. The top four favorite athletic activities are the same for both the mail-out and online surveys. The top four athletic activities are walking/hiking on trails, swimming, bicycling, and exercising/working out.

Mail-out Survey

1) Walk/hike on trails	60%
2) Swim	39%
3) Bicycling	37%
4) Exercise/work out	30%
5) Running/jogging	18%
6) Golf	17%
7) Basketball	13%
8) Soccer	13%
9) Baseball/softball	13%
10) Tennis	9%
11) Other	9%
12) Skating/hockey	3%
13) Football	3%
14) Volleyball	3%
15) Skateboarding	2%

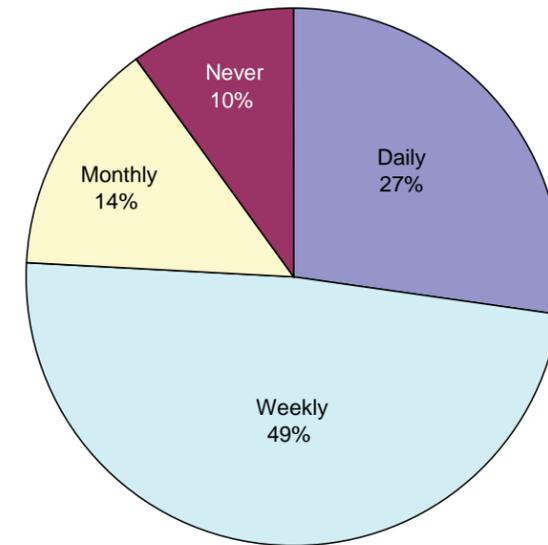
Online Survey

1) Walk/hike on trails	20%
2) Swim	19%
3) Bicycling	11%
4) Exercise/work out	11%
5) Golf	8%
6) Running/jogging	7%
7) Baseball/softball	7%
8) Soccer	4%
9) Basketball	3%
10) Other	3%
11) Tennis	2%
12) Football	2%
13) Skating/hockey	1%
14) Volleyball	1%
15) Skateboarding	0%

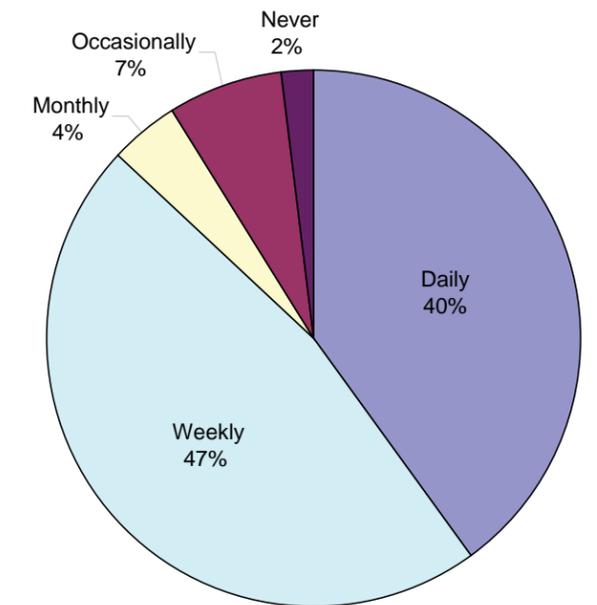
Frequency of Participation

Knowing how frequently residents participate in their favorite activities gives the City staff an idea of how much use and demand there is for the facilities. 76% of mail-out survey respondents and 87% of online survey participants responded that they participated in their athletic activity either daily or weekly. This indicates that the city facilities are receiving a heavy amount of use.

Frequency of Participating in Athletic Activities (mail-out survey)



Frequency of Participating in Athletic Activities (online survey)





Organizations Utilized to Participate in Activities

Again, residents were asked which organization they utilize when participating in their favorite athletic activity. For both surveys, the number one response was that residents utilize City of Norman facilities. All responses are shown below.

Mail-out Survey

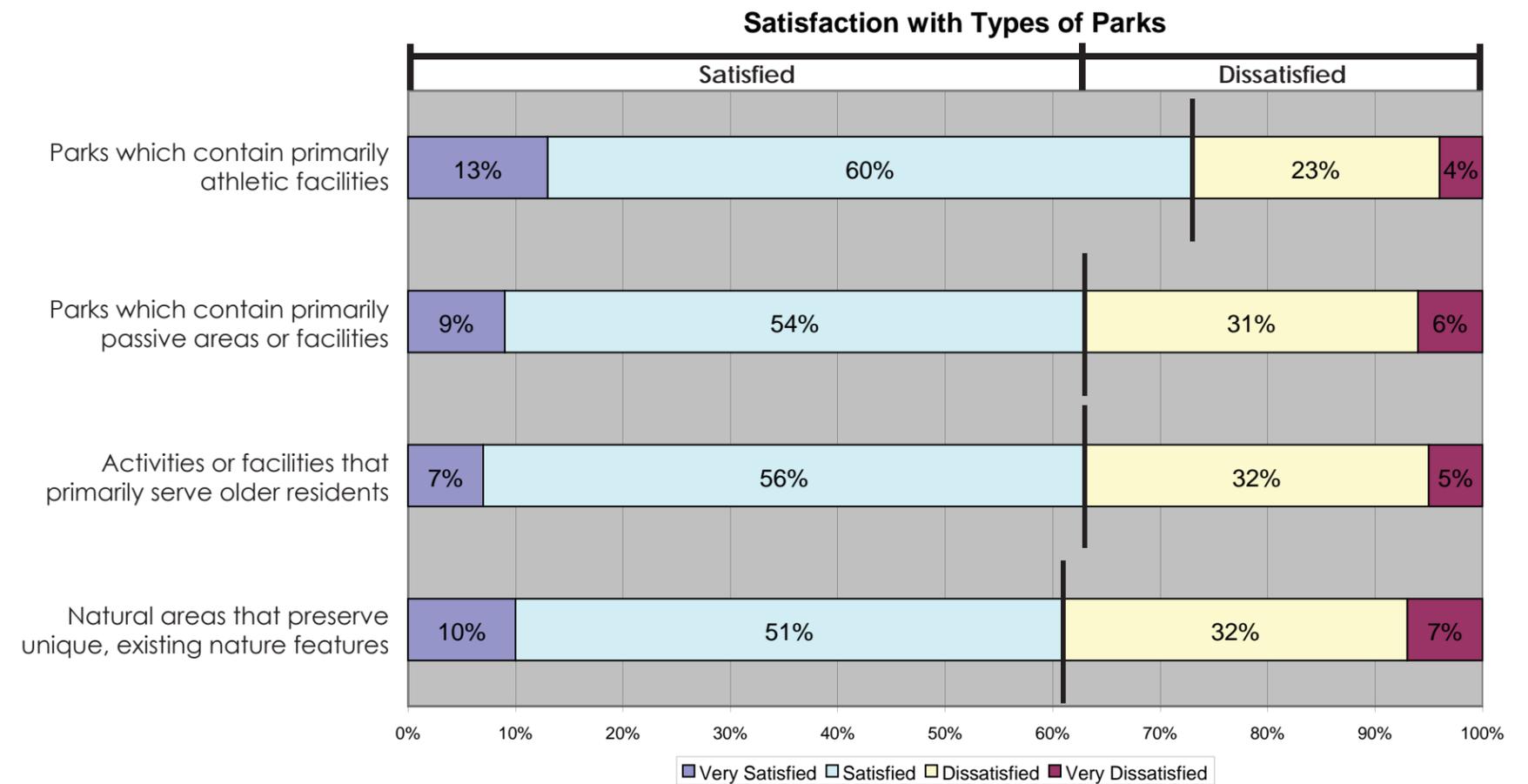
1) City of Norman	60%
2) State Park/Lake Thunderbird	31%
3) University of Oklahoma	26%
4) YMCA	23%
5) Other	22%
6) Churches	21%
7) Private Clubs	19%
8) Norman Public Schools	17%
9) Non-profit Youth	6%

Online Survey

1) City of Norman	27%
2) University of Oklahoma	15%
3) YMCA	11%
4) State Park/Lake Thunderbird	10%
5) Other	10%
6) Norman Public Schools	9%
7) Private Clubs	9%
8) Churches	6%
9) Non-profit Youth	3%

Satisfaction with Different Types of Parks

As an added component, a question on the online survey asked residents how satisfied they were with different categories of parks in Norman. The residents were given four different types of parks and asked to rate their satisfaction for each. 73% of residents said they were either satisfied or very satisfied with parks that contain primarily athletic facilities. Only 63% of residents said they were satisfied or very satisfied with parks that contain primarily passive areas or facilities such as picnic sites, trails and nature viewing areas. The levels of dissatisfaction with the number of passive parks, nature preserves and senior facilities are significant enough to indicate a need to increase these types of parks. The responses are shown in the graph below.



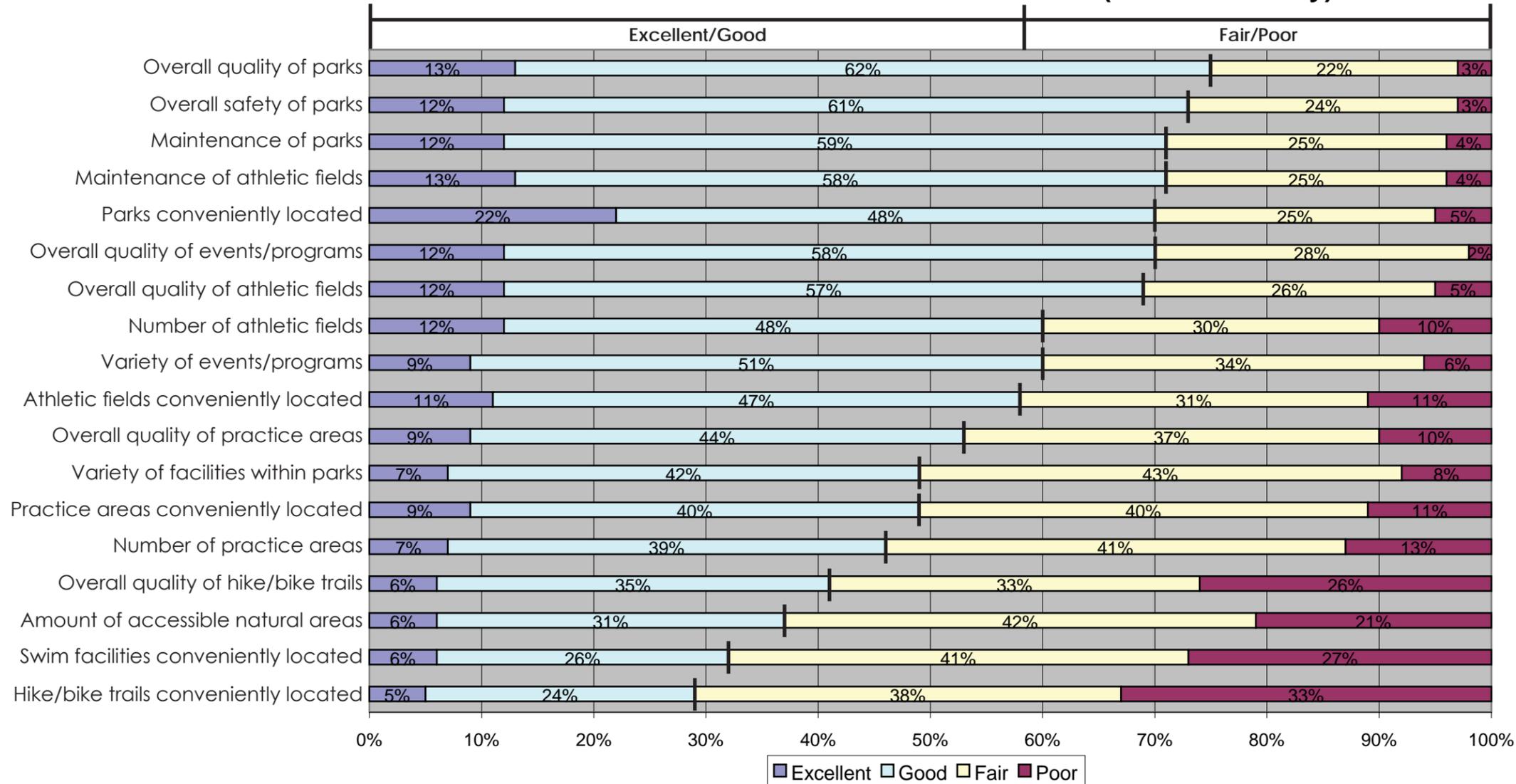


Perceptions of Facility Conditions

Residents were given a list of different conditional characteristics of the parks in Norman. They were then asked to rate each characteristic as excellent, good, fair or poor. The results from the mail-out survey are shown on this page and the online survey results are shown on the opposite page.

The majority of residents feel that the overall quality, safety and maintenance of parks in Norman is either excellent or good. One surprising finding from this question is that having hike and bike trails conveniently located was the lowest rated item. This again shows the strong desire by residents to have a connected, citywide hike and bike trails system. Other key areas that did not rate as well are the number of practice areas, the amount of natural areas, and having swim facilities conveniently located to all residents.

Condition of Recreational Characteristics (Mail-out Survey)



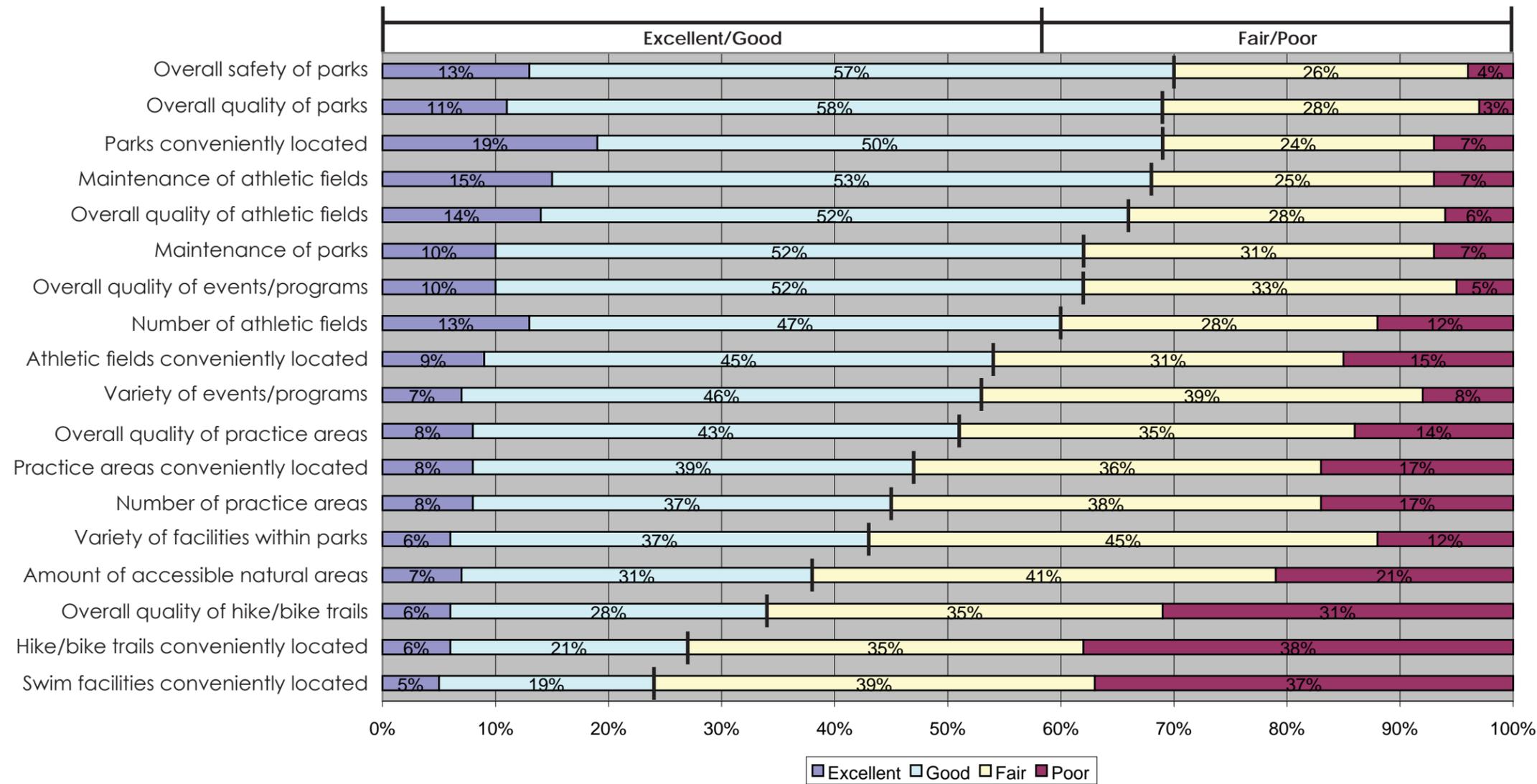


Condition of Recreational Characteristics

The online survey results closely mirror those of the mail-out survey. Again, the overall quality of hike and bike trails, as well as having hike and bike trails conveniently located, were both rated very low. Only 34% of residents feel that the overall quality of hike and bike trails is either excellent or good, and 27% of residents

feel that the location of hike and bike trails is either excellent or good. Again this demonstrates a strong desire for more hike and bike trails throughout the City.

Condition of Recreational Characteristics (Online Survey)





Student Survey Results

Why use a student survey - Students and the youth in a community are often times the primary users of parks. Since this segment of the population frequently utilizes parks and recreation facilities, they often have valuable suggestions on ways to improve them. Children and teens are likely to have a keen insight about what needs to be improved, what amenities are lacking, and what facilities are the most enjoyable to them as compared to their adult counterparts. Since they are the portion of the population that spends much of their leisure time in parks, their opinions and suggestions are extremely relevant and important.

Survey Methodology - A two page survey was distributed to the 4th, 7th and 10th grade students of Norman Public Schools. Individual classroom teachers distributed the survey to the students who were asked to answer each question honestly. A total of 2,056 surveys were returned.

Location of students - Surveys were received from many schools in the Norman Public Schools system. The percentage of respondents from each school is shown below.

Norman High	17%	Adams Elementary	3%
Norman North High	11%	Madison Elementary	3%
Whittier Middle	10%	Roosevelt Elementary	3%
Longfellow Middle	8%	Kennedy Elementary	3%
Irving Middle	8%	Jefferson Elementary	3%
Alcott Middle	5%	McKinley Elementary	3%
Truman Elementary	5%	Monroe Elementary	2%
Washington Elementary	4%	Lincoln Elementary	2%
Eisenhower Elementary	4%	Lakeview Elementary	1%
Cleveland Elementary	4%	Wilson Elementary	1%
		Jackson Elementary	1%

Reasons for Satisfaction with parks in Norman - Students were asked what they most like about parks in Norman. This was an open-ended question where students could write any answer they wanted. Some of the more popular answers include: swings/slides/equipment with an 18% response rate; fun/active/running/exercise (12%); toys/playgrounds (10%); clean/well maintained/safe/quiet (9%); nature/trees/wildlife/beauty (7%); open space/fields/no fencing (6%); and events/activities (5%).

Reasons for Dissatisfaction with parks in Norman - Students were also asked the open-ended question regarding what they do not like about parks in Norman. Some of the most common responses include: trash/dog droppings/no recycling bins with an 18% response rate; broken equipment (12%); crowded/noisy/too small (8%); and bad behavior/gangs/unsafe (7%). With minor upgrades and renovations to the parks, such as upgrading playground equipment and providing more trash bins/recycling bins, two of the primary reasons for dissatisfaction can be addressed.

Favorite Park in Norman - Students were asked what their favorite park in Norman was. The six most popular parks with the percentage of students who chose that park are shown below.

Reaves Park	33%
Andrews Park	28%
Lions Park	8%
Westwood Park	7%
Brookhaven	5%
Griffin Park	3%

What do you do in parks - The students were given a list of various activities that are offered or provided in the parks in Norman. They were then asked to choose all the activities they normally participate in when they visit a park. Playgrounds, active sports, using trails and swimming were the top four activities. Their responses are shown below.

Meet with friends	66%
Play on a playground	65%
Play baseball, soccer or football	48%
Enjoy nature	43%
Walk/run on trails	42%
Go swimming	36%
Family activity such as picnic	33%
Play basketball or volleyball	32%
Other	19%
Skateboard	17%

What do you like to do at Lake Thunderbird - Students were asked if they have ever visited Lake Thunderbird State Park (those results are shown on the opposite page). Of those who said yes, they were then asked what activities they like to do while visiting Lake Thunderbird. The answers and the percentage of students who chose that activity are shown below.

Swimming	57%
Boating	54%
Fishing	50%
Other	40%
Picnicking	35%

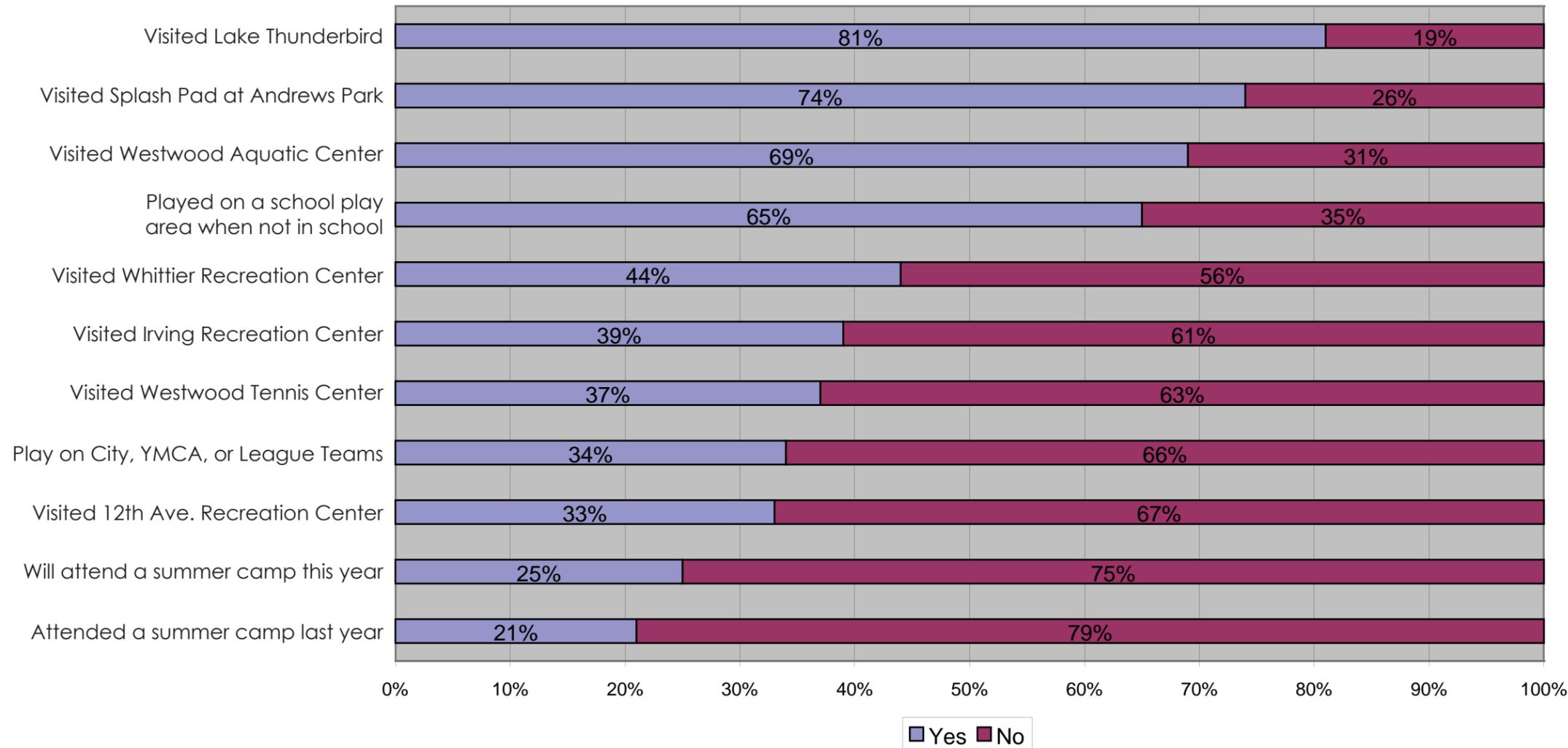




Participation or Utilization of Specific Facilities

Students were given a list of various facilities throughout the City and asked if they have visited or utilized those facilities in the past 12 months. The most heavily utilized facility was Lake Thunderbird State Park with 81% of students indicating they have been to the lake in the past year. The second most utilized facility was the splash pad at Andrews Park with 74% indicating they have utilized it. This was followed by the Westwood Aquatic Center as the third most utilized facility with 69% indicating they have visited the center in the past 12 months. A large amount had also visited the Whittier and Irving Recreation Centers.

Participation or Utilization of Facilities



Sports teams - For the students who answered that they have played on a sports team in the past 12 months, they were then asked which sports they played. Their responses are shown below along with the percentage of students who chose that sport.

Soccer	37%
Basketball	36%
Other	35%
Baseball	22%
Swimming	19%
Softball	18%
Tennis	13%

School Play Areas - If the student chose yes when asked if they had played on a school play area after school or on the weekends, they were then asked which school. Their responses are shown below.

Truman	16%
Cleveland	9%
Eisenhower	8%
Irving	6%
McKinley	6%
Monroe	6%
Jackson	5%
Kennedy	5%





Interest in Various Recreational Activities

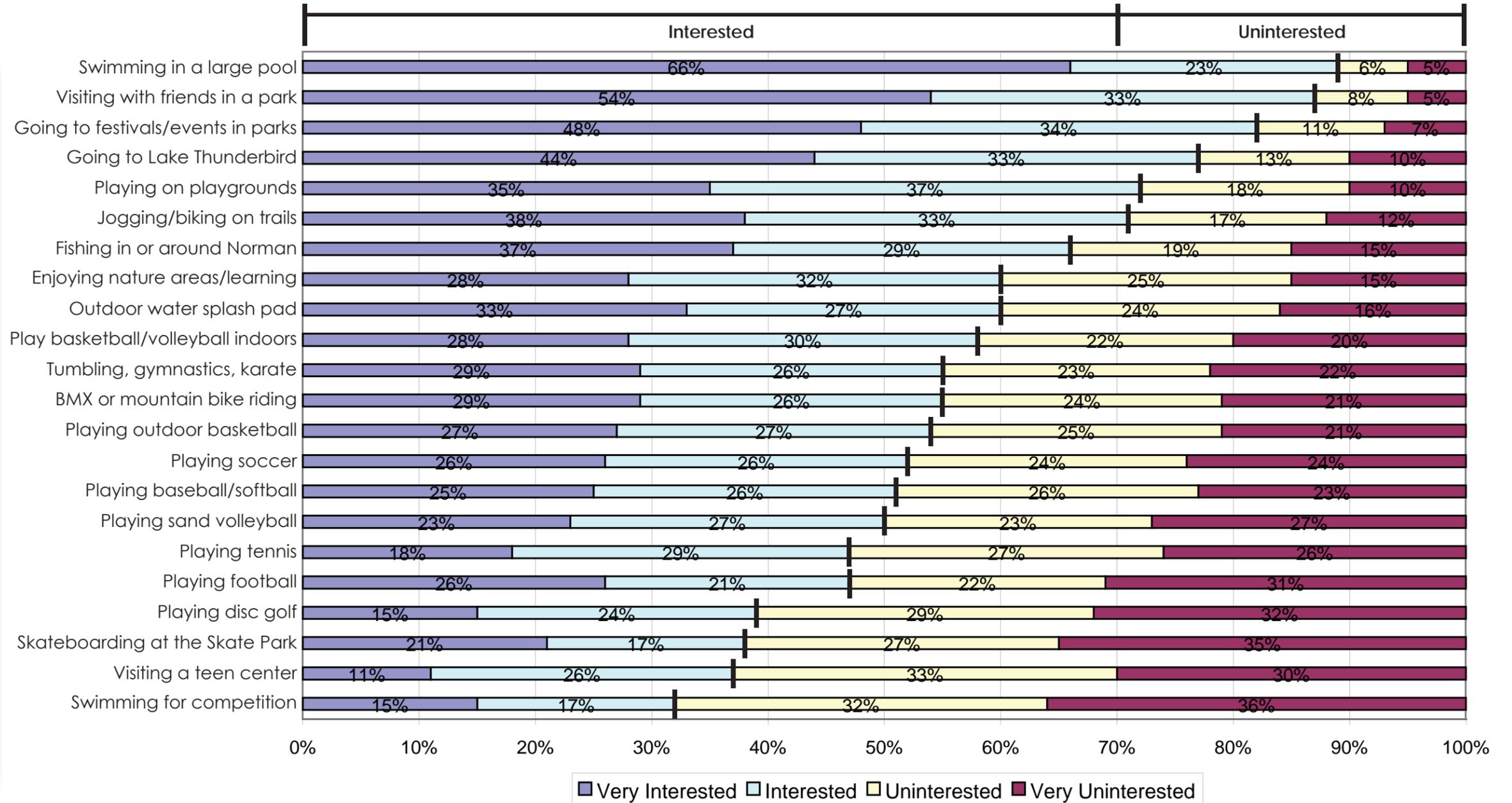
The students were given a list of various recreational activities that could be offered by the Norman Parks and Recreation Department. They were then asked to indicate their level of interest in each activity. Their responses are shown in the bar graph to the right.

The number one activity was swimming in a large pool with lots of fun things to do. 89% of all students were either interested or very interested in this activity. This activity also received the highest amount of students indicating they were very interested. A very high 66% said they were very interested.

The second highest rated activity was visiting with friends in a park. This response is common among students who often view parks as social gathering places.

The third highest activity that students are interested in was going to festivals or events in parks. Again, the students view parks as places to gather and be social, so providing activities for them to do while there is important.

Interest in Recreational Activities





Single Most Favorite Recreational Activity - The students were then asked to write the one activity that they would consider being their favorite from the previous list. Their responses vary somewhat from the previous question. Swimming in a large pool with lots of fun things to do was still the highest rated activity with 18% of students listing this as their favorite.

The next three highest rated activities are sports: soccer (9%); baseball or softball (8%); and football (8%). Even though these were rated 14th, 15th, and 18th respectively on the previous question dealing with level of interest, students still listed them as their favorite activity.

The top six responses are shown below.

Swimming in a large pool	18%
Playing soccer	9%
Playing baseball/softball	8%
Playing football	8%
Going to Lake Thunderbird	6%
Visiting with friends at a park	6%

Reasons for Not Participating in Activities - The final question on the student survey asked students what are the main reasons why they do not participate in their favorite recreation activities. They were asked to choose all applicable reasons from a list given and to write in any additional reasons they might have. Their responses are shown below. Lack of access and cost related issues were the most common responses.

No place for that sport or activity near where I live	36%
Hard to get a ride to that activity or sport	30%
That sport or activity is too expensive	26%
I don't have the right equipment for that activity	22%
I prefer to do indoor activities like video games/watch TV	18%
I prefer to play at my house instead of at a park	16%

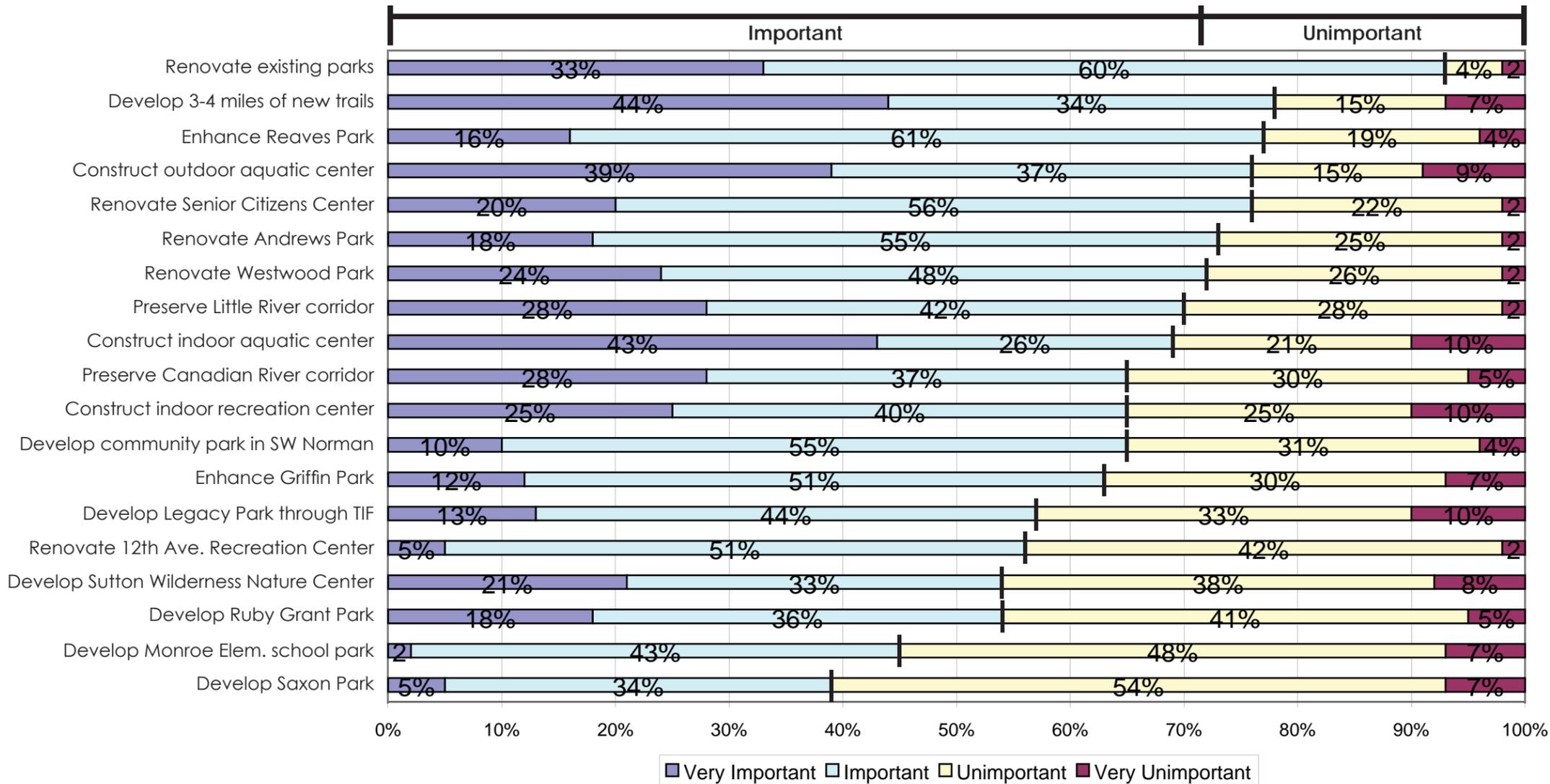




Open House Questionnaire Results

Potential recommendations of this master plan were presented at an open house in August, 2009. Along with the presentation, the residents were asked to answer a questionnaire which asked how important or unimportant they thought each recommendation was. The results are shown below. Renovation of existing parks received the highest level of importance with 93% of residents indicating it was either important or very important.

Importance of Master Plan Recommendations



Most Important Actions

The residents were then asked to write which three of the previous recommendations were the most important to them. The results of this question were different than the previous one. Approximately 70 people attended the open house/public meeting; and the construction of an indoor aquatic center received the highest level of importance with 43% of the meeting attendees listing this recommendation as the most important to them. However on the previous question, the construction of an indoor aquatic center was ranked nine out of nineteen recommendations in terms of importance.

The top ten recommendations that meeting attendees wrote as important to them are listed below.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----|
| 1) Construct indoor aquatic center | 43% |
| 2) Construct outdoor aquatic center | 32% |
| 3) Construct 3-4 miles of trails | 23% |
| 4) Develop Ruby Grant Park | 18% |
| 5) Renovate Westwood Park | 18% |
| 6) Preserve Little River corridor | 18% |
| 7) Preserve Canadian River corridor | 18% |
| 8) Construct indoor rec center | 11% |
| 9) Renovate existing parks | 11% |
| 10) Develop Sutton Wilderness | 11% |



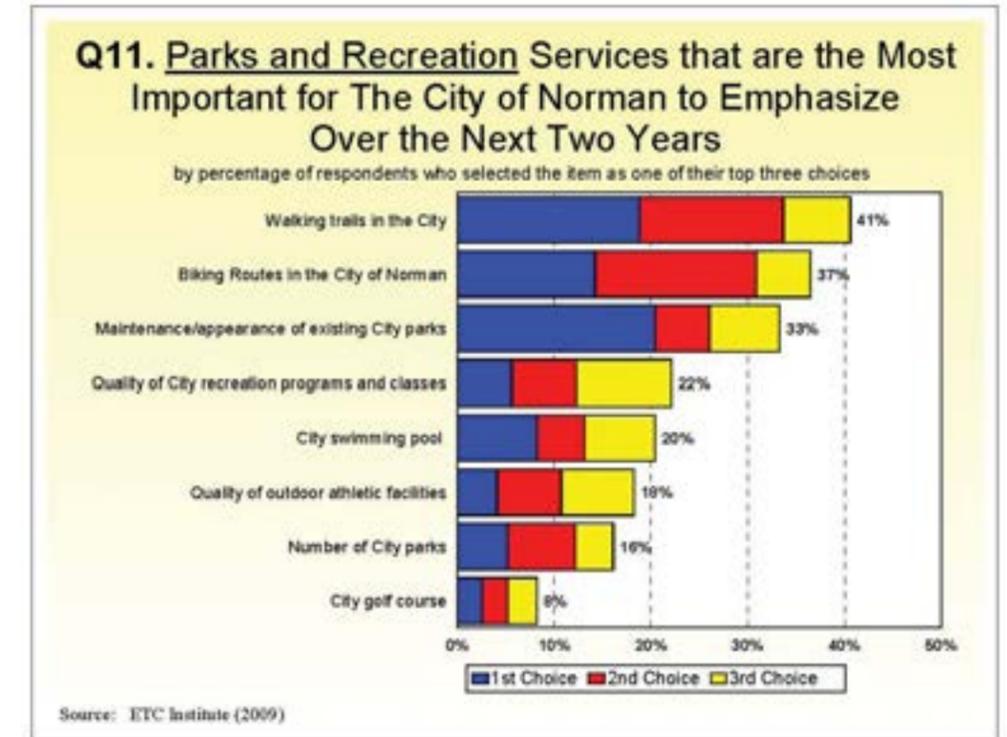
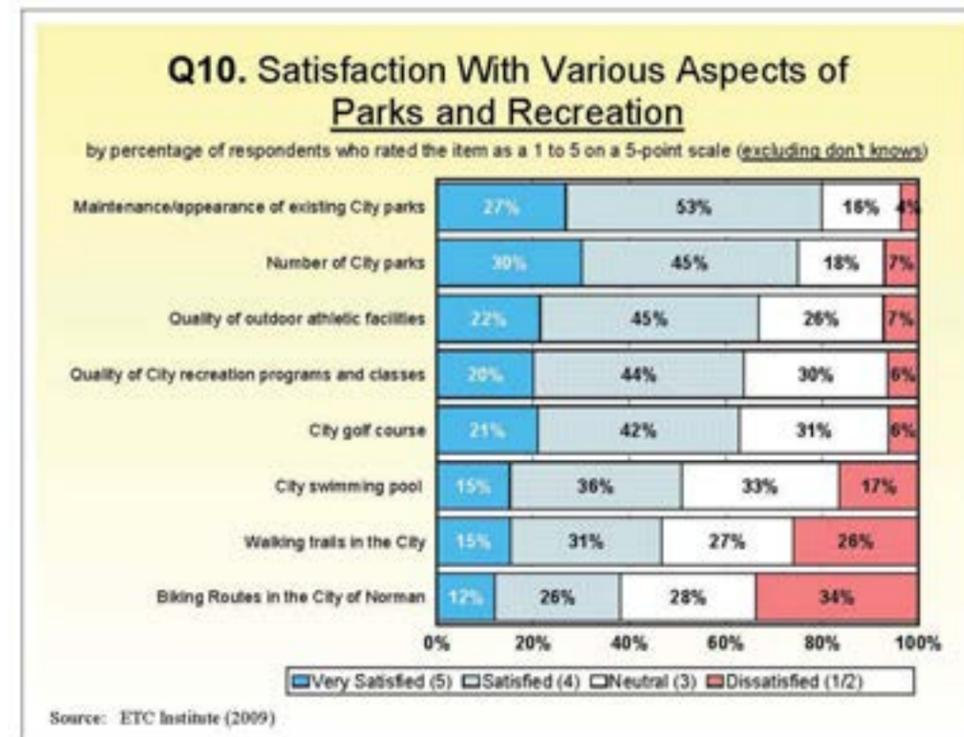


2009 Norman Community Survey

The following graphs and survey results are from the final report of the 2009 Community Survey that was conducted in July 2009. The seven page mail-out survey asked residents a series of questions regarding their satisfaction with services that the City provides. One of those services is parks and recreation programs and facilities. To the right and on the following pages are results from the 2009 Community Survey regarding only parks and recreation questions.

Residents were given a list of different aspects of parks and recreation in Norman, and asked how satisfied they were with each aspect. The maintenance and appearance of existing parks received the highest level of satisfaction, with 80% of residents indicating they were either very satisfied or satisfied. The results are shown below for the level of satisfaction for various recreation considerations in Norman.

Residents of Norman were also asked what parks and recreation services they feel were the most important for the City to emphasize over the next two years. The aspect that received the highest level of importance was walking trails in the City with 41% of residents indicating this as one of their top three choices. The second highest aspect was biking routes with 37% of residents indicating this was also one of their top three choices. Both of these suggest that residents of Norman want to be able to have places to ride or walk for pleasure or for commuting throughout the City.





Importance - Satisfaction Rating

The 2009 Community Survey included a ranking of the most important parks and recreation issues. The survey derived these rankings by evaluating both level of importance (how important that particular item was to the respondent) and the respondents' lack of satisfaction with that item. The survey ratings largely concur and reinforce the public input findings of this Master Plan.

Category of Service	Most Important %	Most Important Rank	Satisfaction %	Satisfaction Rank	Importance-Satisfaction Rating	I-S Rating Rank
Very High Priority (IS > .20)						
Biking Routes in the City of Norman	37%	2	38%	8	0.2259	1
Walking trails in the City	41%	1	47%	7	0.2164	2
High Priority (IS .10-.20)						
City swimming pool	20%	5	51%	6	0.1004	3
Medium Priority (IS < .10)						
Quality of City recreation programs and classes	22%	4	64%	4	0.0800	4
Maintenance/appearance of existing City parks	33%	3	80%	1	0.0666	5
Quality of outdoor athletic facilities	18%	6	67%	3	0.0602	6
Number of City parks	16%	7	75%	2	0.0403	7
City golf course	8%	8	63%	5	0.0305	8

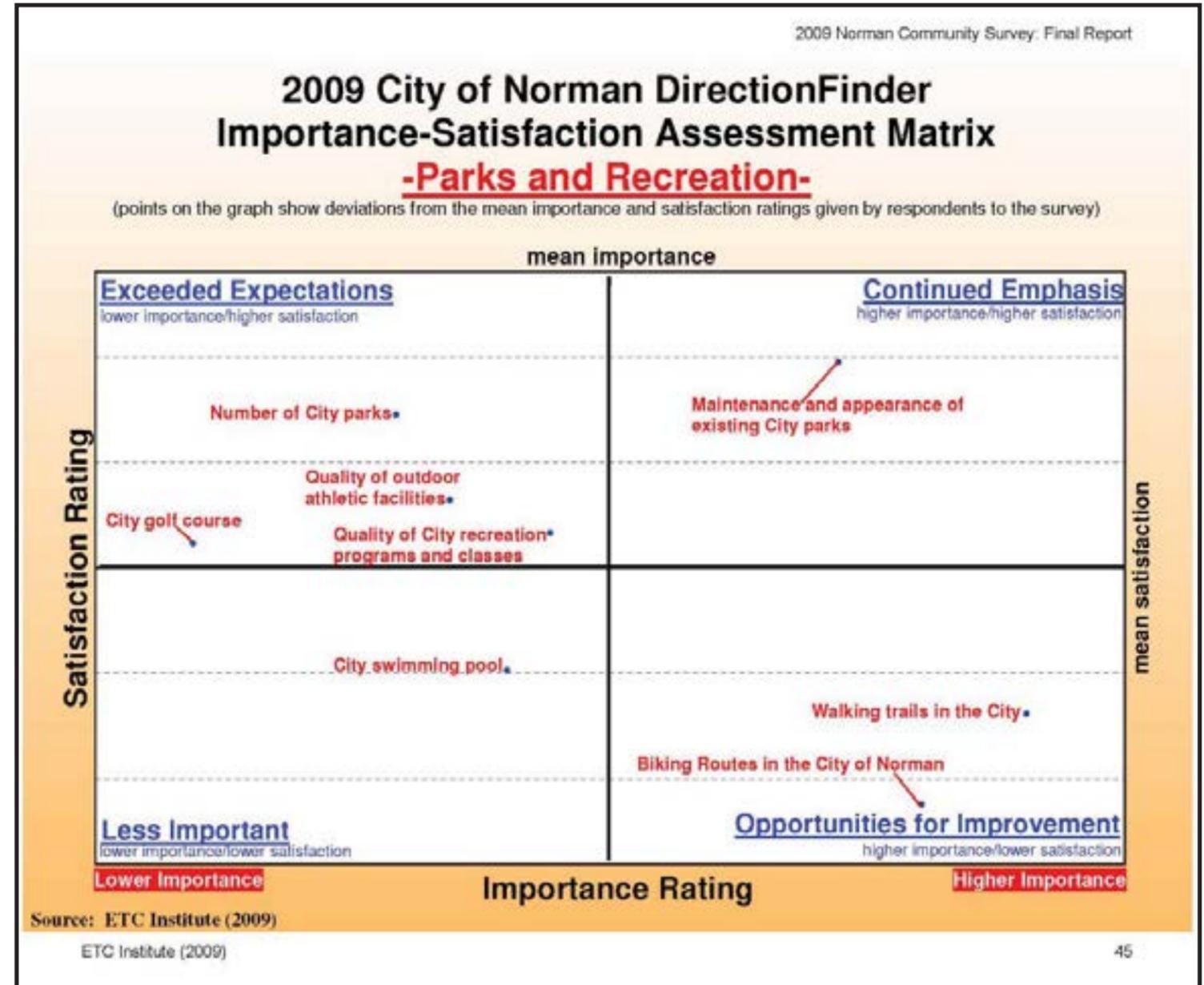
Note: The I-S Rating is calculated by multiplying the "Most Important" % by (1-"Satisfaction" %)

Most Important %: The "Most Important" percentage represents the sum of the first, second and third most important responses for each item. Respondents were asked to identify the items they thought were the most important for the City to emphasize over the next two years.

Satisfaction %: The "Satisfaction" percentage represents the sum of the ratings "4" and "5" excluding 'don't knows.' Respondents ranked their level of satisfaction with the each of the items on a scale of 1 to 5 with "5" being very satisfied and "1" being very dissatisfied.

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This matrix provides a visual graphing of the Importance - Satisfaction Rating that was just discussed. The importance level is used as the x-axis and the satisfaction level is used as the y-axis. Each park and recreation aspect is then plotted on the graph.





Chapter 5

Assessment of Norman's Park Needs



Chapter 5

Assessment of Norman's Park Needs

Assessment of Norman's Needs

Norman is evolving and changing daily as is the world around us. Our interests evolve, new technologies and activities are created, and major events shape our futures. All of these changes have long term impacts on parks and recreation needs in Norman. The Needs Assessment compares the state of the city today with the parks and recreation facilities that will be needed in the future. The assessment of what deficiencies exist in the parks and recreation system today is vital so that actions can be developed to address immediate deficiencies. It is also important to project potential future needs and develop a plan of actions to address these needs. The Needs Assessment is effectively the most critical component of the parks and recreation master planning effort.

Three techniques are used in evaluating the City of Norman's current and future park needs. These three methods are:

- ▶ Level of Service-based assessment, using locally developed level of service for facilities;
- ▶ Demand-based assessment, using actual and/or anticipated growth data;
- ▶ Resource-based assessment, using assessments of unique physical features in Norman.

All three techniques are important in their own way, but individually do not represent the entire story. This assessment, and the recommendations resulting from it, uses findings from all three techniques in a combined manner to determine what types of parks and recreation facilities are needed in Norman. Ultimately, these needs are vetted by the citizens of Norman and are determined to best represent the key parks and recreational needs of the City.

Level of Service-Based Assessment

Uses target level of service established by the local jurisdiction, in this case the City of Norman, to determine the quantity of park facilities required to meet the City's needs. These target levels of service usually are expressed as the quantity of park facilities needed to adequately serve every 1,000 citizens of Norman, or at a given ratio of each facility to a certain number of residents.

These targets are established to provide the level of service that the particular jurisdiction believes is most responsive to the amount of use and the interest of its citizens. This plan establishes individual City specific levels of service for Norman.



Demand-Based Assessment

Uses participation rates, league usage, and citizen input to determine how much the population uses and desires different types of recreation facilities.

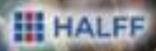


Resource-Based Assessment

The third method is based on the usefulness of available physical resources to provide recreation opportunities. Examples of resources include the Canadian River, Little River and Lake Thunderbird.

"The right of children to play, to sing and to dance; the right of youth to sport for sports sake; the right of men and women to use leisure in the pursuit of happiness in their own way, are basic to our American heritage."

Harry S. Truman





Standards Based Assessment (LOS)

Many recreation needs assessments use national guidelines and standards to determine what their facility needs should be. It is important to recognize that national standards are simply guidelines or benchmarks that are intended to serve as a starting point for park planning. Each city has its own unique geographic, demographic, and socio-economic composition, and as such the arbitrary application of national standards would not necessarily meet the need of that particular community. These standards are typically no longer used to project facility needs since they are based on a "one size fits all" type of evaluation.

Rather, this Master Plan methodology utilizes the existing level of service in the City as a starting point and determines whether that level of service is adequate, or whether it needs to be increased or decreased. Extensive public input is used to determine how to adjust the current level of service, as well as the anticipated growth of the City, and what parts of Norman are well served and which parts are not. Local needs and desires are used to mold these guidelines to meet the expectations of the citizens of Norman in a realistic manner.

Three types of level of service determinations are made as shown below.

Spatial Level of Service - Defines the acres of parkland needed, and are usually expressed as a ratio of park acreage to population.

Facility Level of Service - Defines the number of facilities recommended serving each particular recreation need. Facility standards are usually expressed as a ratio of units of a particular facility per population size. For example, a facility standard for a recreation center might be one square foot for every resident of the city.

Development Guideline Standards - Defines the exact spatial and dimensional requirements for a specific recreation area or facility. A neighborhood park, for example, might be required to have a playground, a basketball court, and a picnic pavilion. These are described in both Chapter 3 and this Chapter.

Target Park Acreage Levels of Service

The purpose of spatial levels of service for parks and recreational areas is to ensure that sufficient area is allocated for all the outdoor recreation needs of a community. They allow a city to plan ahead so that parkland can be targeted and acquired before it is developed. These spatial standards are expressed as the number of acres of parkland per 1,000 inhabitants. Typical spatial levels of service for the southwest United States region in general are shown below.

Home Based Parks

- ▶ **Neighborhood Parks** - Varies from 1/2 acre for every 1,000 residents to over 4 acres per 1,000 residents in cities that focus extensively on their small park network.
- ▶ **Community Parks** - Varies from less than 2 acres per 1,000 residents to over 8 acres per 1,000 residents. Typical range is between 3 and 4 acres for every 1,000 residents.
- ▶ **Close to Home Parks** - Varies from less than 3 acres for every 1,000 residents to over 12 acres per 1,000 residents in a few cities. The typical range is approximately 4 to 5 acres.

Other Parks/Open Space

- ▶ **Metropolitan/Regional Parks** - Varies from 5 to over 30 acres per 1,000 residents. In some cities, large greenbelts or open space areas may distort this number.
- ▶ **Special Purpose Parks** - These vary greatly depending on the characteristics of each city, and typically have no general target level of service.
- ▶ **Linear Parks/Linkage Parks** - Varies considerably from less than 1 acre to over 20 acres per 1,000 residents.
- ▶ **Open Space Preserves** - Varies considerably from less than 1 acre to over 50 acres per 1,000 residents depending on how open space is classified. For example, the surface area of a lake, while not accessible to anyone without a boat, could alter the ratio of open space in a city.





Neighborhood Parks in Norman

Neighborhood parks are typically centrally located in a neighborhood or central to the several smaller neighborhoods it serves. Ideally a neighborhood park would be 2 to 10 acres in size, and serve no more than 2,000 to 4,000 residents. They should be integrated into the community in a prominent manner and not layered in as an afterthought.

A pocket park is a type of neighborhood park that serves a smaller number of residents and is therefore smaller in size. They are typically less than one acre in size and provide public gathering places for residents. For the purpose of this section, pocket parks are included with neighborhood parks.

Prominence of neighborhood parks reflects the importance of having them as centerpieces of a neighborhood. The recommended target level of service goal is 2.5 acres of neighborhood parks for 1,000 residents.

Norman currently has 282.7 acres of City-owned neighborhood parks, yielding an existing level of service of 2.52 acres of neighborhood parkland for every 1,000 residents, or 1 acre for every 397 residents of the City. Future needs of neighborhood parks to meet the target level of service are summarized below.



Brookhaven Park and Lions Park are two examples of neighborhood parks in Norman.



Location of neighborhood parks in Norman.

Existing Neighborhood Park Level of Service

Recommended Level of Service - 2.5 acres per every 1,000 residents

Neighborhood Parks in Norman

- ▶ Current acres - 282.7 acres
- ▶ Current Level of Service - 2.52 acres per 1,000 residents
- ▶ % of Recommended Level of Service - 100.4%

Neighborhood Parks (Surplus or Deficit)

Recommended Level of Service - 2.5 acres per every 1,000 residents

- ▶ Current 2009 need with 112,345 population - Target of 281 acres, a surplus 0.9 acres.
- ▶ Year 2015 need with 120,152 population - Target of 300 acres, a deficit of 18 acres.
- ▶ Year 2020 need with 128,404 population - Target of 321 acres, a deficit of 39 acres (because of Norman's Parkland Dedication Ordinance, this deficit will be met with new development).

Neighborhood Park Distribution

Since neighborhood parks serve as a central gathering place for neighborhood residents, accessibility is a critical component of these parks more so than any other type of park. As discussed earlier, the maximum service area for a neighborhood park is 1/2 mile, excluding areas opposite a major collector or arterial road. The ultimate preferred service area is 1/4 mile, this goal will result in smaller neighborhood parks that are more accessible throughout Norman. Note that for the purpose of access, every park in Norman is considered as the "neighborhood" park for the areas close to the park.

The maps on this page and the following page illustrate the distribution and service areas for neighborhood parks in Norman.





Community Parks in Norman

Community parks are large parks that serve several neighborhoods or a portion of a city. They serve as locations for larger community events, sports and activities; therefore they contain many popular recreation and support facilities. Because of the larger service area and additional programs, community parks are more heavily used, increasing the potential for facility deterioration.

The additional facilities associated with a community park increase the spatial requirements necessary for a community park. The recommended standard for community parks is 6 acres per 1,000 residents.

Norman currently has 512.1 acres of community parkland, yielding an existing level of service of 4.6 acres per 1,000 residents, or one acre for every 219 residents of the City. Based on the recommended standard, the City is meeting two-thirds of the recommended standard for community parkland.



Andrews Park, Griffin Memorial Park and Little Axe Park are examples of community parks in Norman.

Existing Community Park Level of Service

Recommended Level of Service - 6 acres per every 1,000 residents

Community Parks in Norman

- ▶ Current acres - 512.1 acres
- ▶ Current Level of Service - 4.6 acres per 1,000 residents (for all community parks including the undeveloped community parks)
- ▶ % of Recommended Level of Service - 76.6%

Community Parks (Surplus or Deficit)

Recommended Level of Service - 6 acres per every 1,000 residents

- ▶ Current 2009 need with 112,345 population - Target of 674 acres, a deficit of 162 acres.
- ▶ Year 2015 need with 120,152 population - Target of 721 acres, a deficit of 209 acres.
- ▶ Year 2020 need with 128,404 population - Target of 770 acres, a deficit of 258 acres (deficit assumes that no new community parkland will be acquired).

Community Park Distribution

As mentioned, community parks serve a larger portion of the community. Since they are typically accessed by car, a service area for a community park is 2 miles.

The map on the following page illustrates the distribution and service areas for community parks in Norman.





Community Park Service Areas





Other Types of Parks

Other types of parks that respond to specific physical conditions in the city or to specific needs are also part of the Norman park system. These include special purpose parks such as golf courses or aquatic centers; linear or linkage parks; regional parks; and open space or natural preserves.

Special Purpose Parks in Norman

Special purpose parks are areas designated for a special purpose such as golf courses, sports complexes, aquatic centers, plazas, or downtown courtyards. Westwood Park and Sutton Wilderness are designated as special purpose parks in Norman, totaling 289.9 acres in size.

Because special purpose parks vary by size, type and from city to city, there is no specific standard or recommended level of service.

Existing Special Purpose Park LOS

Recommended Level of Service - varies by city/park

Special Purpose Parks in Norman

- ▶ Current acres - 289.9 acres
- ▶ Current Level of Service - 2.58 acres per 1,000 residents

Westwood Park is an example of a special purpose park in Norman.



Linear Parks in Norman

Norman currently has three areas that are designated as linear parks or greenbelts. **The most recognizable linear park corridor in Norman is the Legacy Trail corridor. The other two include Doubletree Greenbelt and Hall Park Greenbelt.** Norman will benefit from linear parks if they are associated with creeks and can fulfill the purpose of flood protection and open space/habitat preservation, as well as provide opportunities for trails. Opportunities for linear parks exist along creeks, drainage corridors, utility corridors and right-of-ways that traverse the City. Linear parks can connect parks and key areas of the City such as schools, and are relatively inexpensive to develop. The recommended beginning level of service for linear parks is 2 acres for every 1,000 residents.

Existing Linear Park Level of Service

Recommended Level of Service - 2 acres per every 1,000 residents

Linear Parks in Norman

- ▶ Current acres - 56.0 acres
- ▶ Current Level of Service - 0.50 acres per 1,000 residents
- ▶ % of Recommended Level of Service - 25%

Linear Parks (Surplus or Deficit)

Recommended Level of Service - 2 acres per every 1,000 residents

- ▶ Current 2009 need with 112,345 population - Target of 225 acres, a deficit of 169 acres.
- ▶ Year 2015 need with 120,152 population - Target of 240 acres, a deficit of 184 acres.
- ▶ Year 2020 need with 128,404 population - Target of 257 acres, a deficit of 201 acres.





Regional Parks in Norman

Regional parks are larger parks within a 30 minute to 1 hour driving distance that serve the entire region and surrounding communities. Like community parks, they serve as locations for larger community events, sports, and activities. There is only one regional park in Norman which is owned by the State of Oklahoma, the Lake Thunderbird State Park. The total land area surrounding the lake that is designated as parkland/open space is 7,117.58 acres. The water surface area of Lake Thunderbird is 5,496.50 acres.

Because regional parks are usually accessed by car, the regional park in Norman serves the entire City and all residents. Greenbelt corridors along the Little River corridor and the Canadian River corridor could serve as future regional parks for Norman.



Regional Park



Priority Level: low for new regional parks in urban core area.

The only regional park in Norman, Lake Thunderbird State Park, serves the entire City and all residents.

Existing Regional Park Level of Service

Recommended Level of Service - 20 acres per every 1,000 residents

Regional Parks in Norman

- ▶ Current acres - 7,117.58 acres (land only)
- ▶ Current Level of Service - 63.35 acres per 1,000 residents
- ▶ % of Recommended Level of Service - 317%

Regional Parks (Surplus or Deficit)

Recommended Level of Service - 20 acres per every 1,000 residents

- ▶ Current 2009 need with 112,345 population - Target of 2,247 acres, a surplus of 4,870 acres.
- ▶ Year 2015 need with 120,152 population - Target of 2,403 acres, a surplus of 4,715 acres.
- ▶ Year 2020 need with 128,404 population - Target of 2,568 acres, a surplus of 4,550 acres.





Open Space in Norman

Existing open space in Norman includes the Sutton Wilderness, all undeveloped parkland such as Ruby Grant Park and John H. Saxon Park, and the land area surrounding Lake Thunderbird. Because the open space acreage surrounding Lake Thunderbird is so large, the level of service for open space may appear to be misleading. Therefore the level of service is shown when including Lake Thunderbird and when excluding Lake Thunderbird. The acreage when Lake Thunderbird is excluded gives a more realistic assessment of the accessible and "urban" open space that is actually located within the populated areas of Norman.



The preservation of some portions of the John H. Saxon Park and Ruby Grant Park sites, even after they are developed, can provide significant additional open space preserves for Norman.

Existing Open Space Level of Service

Including Lake Thunderbird

Recommended Level of Service - 20 acres per every 1,000 residents

Open Space in Norman

- ▶ Current acres - 7,570.1 acres
- ▶ Current Level of Service - 67.38 acres per 1,000 residents
- ▶ % of Recommended Level of Service - 337%

Existing Open Space Level of Service

Excluding Lake Thunderbird

Recommended Level of Service - 20 acres per every 1,000 residents

Open Space in Norman

- ▶ Current acres - 210 acres
- ▶ Current Level of Service - 1.87 acres per 1,000 residents
- ▶ % of Recommended Level of Service - 9.35%

Open Space (Surplus or Deficit)

Including Lake Thunderbird

Recommended Level of Service - 20 acres per every 1,000 residents

- ▶ Current 2009 need with 112,345 population - Target of 2,247 acres, a surplus of 5,353 acres.
- ▶ Year 2015 need with 120,152 population - Target of 2,403 acres, a surplus of 5,167 acres.
- ▶ Year 2020 need with 128,404 population - Target of 2,568 acres, a surplus of 5,002 acres.

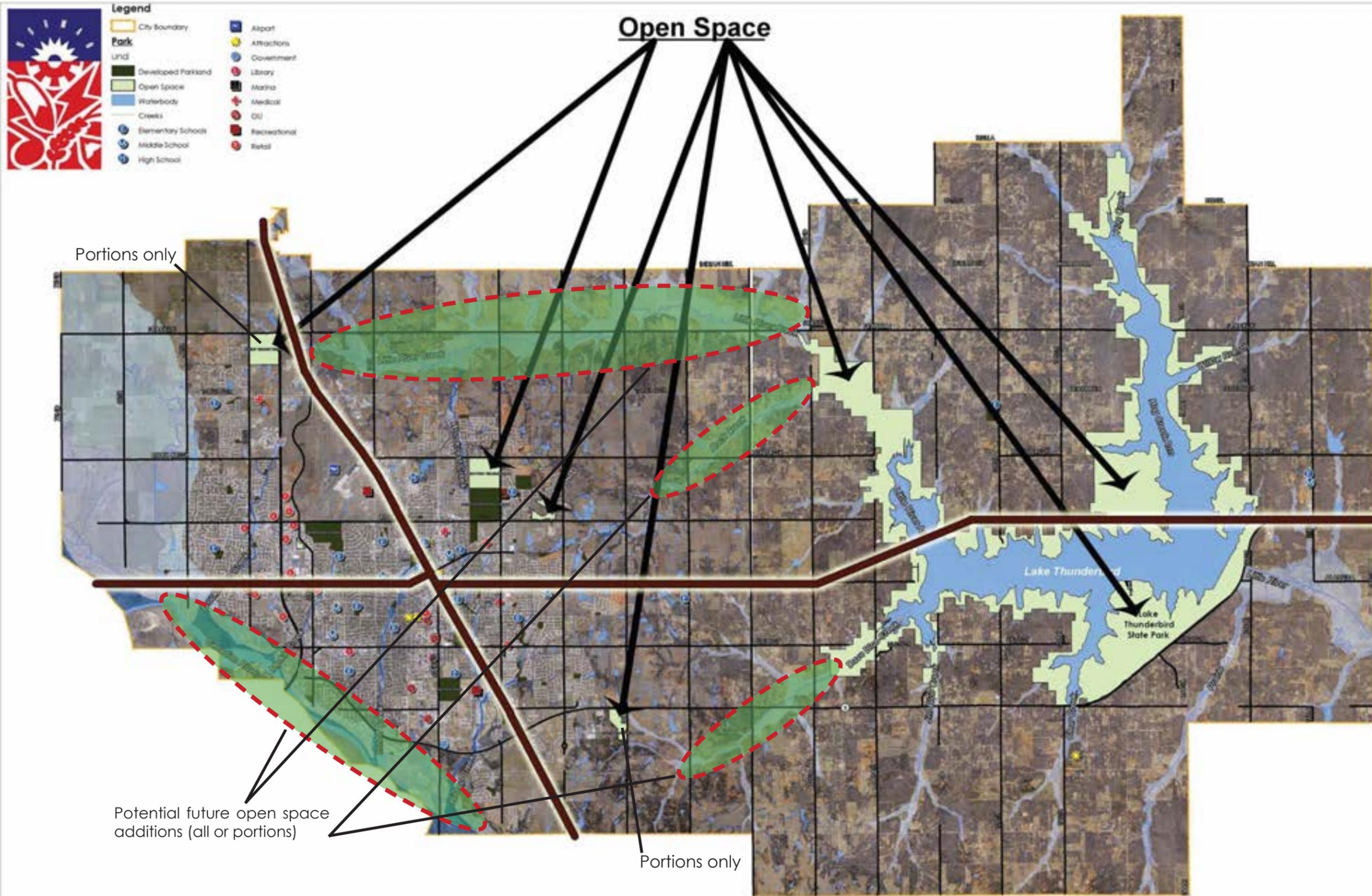
Open Space (Surplus or Deficit)

Excluding Lake Thunderbird

Recommended Level of Service - 20 acres per every 1,000 residents

- ▶ Current 2009 need with 112,345 population - Target of 2,247 acres, a deficit of 2,037 acres.
- ▶ Year 2015 need with 120,152 population - Target of 2,403 acres, a deficit of 2,193 acres.
- ▶ Year 2020 need with 128,404 population - Target of 2,568 acres, a deficit of 2,358 acres.





Location of existing and potential open space in Norman.

Priority Level: very high for ongoing permanent preservation as feasible.





Planning for Future Parkland Needs in Norman

Land banking needs to be considered crucial, and ensure that the acquisition of parkland is in a consistent and goal oriented manner. Based upon park acreage standards developed from this master plan, the target level of service for total parkland is 30.5 acres per 1,000 residents. However, this includes the recommended target for regional parkland, and the acreage amount would be skewed if Lake Thunderbird State Park was included. Therefore the target level of service for close in parkland, not including regional parkland, is 10.5 acres per 1,000 residents. The steps needed to ensure that the adequate amount of parkland is acquired are as follows:

- ▶ Currently there is an overall deficit of 20 acres of parkland.
- ▶ By the year 2015, an additional 102 acres of combined neighborhood and community parkland will need to be acquired to continue to meet the target level of service.
- ▶ By the year 2020, an additional 188 acres of combined neighborhood and community parkland will need to be acquired to meet the target level of service.

Although large areas of Norman are still undeveloped, development is happening and a rigorous effort should be made to continue to acquire sufficient land for future park needs. Various options are available to acquire land including existing vacant land, land subject to flooding along the creeks and drainage channels, and land dedicated to parks as a requirement of developers to fulfill the City's Parkland Dedication Ordinance. The City should also invest in a Floodplain Preservation Ordinance which will preserve all 100 year floodplains as permanent open space, wildlife habitat, or water protection. Not all available land will be suitable for a park; therefore, the proposed criteria for suitable land for parks includes size, location, and potential connectivity to schools, other parks, places of employment, and retail.

Summary of Park Spatial Needs

Table 5 - 1 summarizes the key spatial needs for the next five to ten years in Norman. Key findings of the spatial analysis are shown in the table which forms a key part of the park master plan recommendations in Chapter 8.

Table 5 - 1

Summary of Key Parkland Needs from 2009 to 2020

Neighborhood Parks

- ▶ Current acreage is 100.4% of the target standard.
- ▶ Neighborhood parks are a key enhancement feature of older neighborhoods, and should be factored into redevelopment plans for each neighborhood.
- ▶ New neighborhoods should be encouraged to integrate small homeowner maintained parks as a permanent feature to help maintain neighborhood vitality.
- ▶ There is a partnership opportunity with Norman Public Schools so that school play areas can become neighborhood parks and practice facilities for the residents near each school.
- ▶ Neighborhood park service deficiencies need to be addressed in two areas of the City, as shown on Page 5 - 5.

Community Parks

- ▶ Current acreage is 76.6% of the target standard.
- ▶ To meet the target standard for community parks by the year 2020, there is a need to acquire 354 acres.
- ▶ The development of Ruby Grant Park and John H. Saxon Park will be key to meeting future needs.
- ▶ There is a need in Norman for both active and passive community parks.
- ▶ Additional lands for future community parks are needed in the southwest and northeast areas of the City.

Regional Parks

- ▶ The current acreage far surpasses the recommended target standard.
- ▶ However, regional passive preserves could be established along the Little River and Canadian River corridors.

Linear Parks

- ▶ Current acreage is 25% of the target standard.
- ▶ The Legacy Trail, Doubletree Greenbelt and Hall Park Greenbelt are the three existing linear parks in Norman.
- ▶ In town, creek corridors and floodplain corridors such as the Little River Creek corridor can be preserved as linear parks and greenbelts.

Citywide Acreage Needs

- ▶ The sum of all combined target level of service goals recommends 30.5 acres per 1,000 residents. However, including the regional park standard distorts the recommendation because the existing regional park acreage far exceeds the target standard.
- ▶ Therefore, the recommended overall target level of service is 10.5 acres per 1,000 residents.
- ▶ The total City owned park acreage is 98% of the target standard.
- ▶ To meet the 2020 target level of service, an additional 188 acres will be needed of both neighborhood and community parks.





Park Facility Needs Assessment

Facility levels of service define the number of facilities recommended to serve each particular type of recreation. They are expressed as the usage capacity served by each recreational unit. The target levels of service shown on the following pages are based on the actual number of facilities in Norman and the amount of use each facility receives.

Facility Target Level of Service

The following pages have a description of the 2009 target level of service for each recreational facility. A specific review of each major type of outdoor facility, key needs and key issues associated with each type of facility follows. Facility needs are based both on ratios related to existing population, as well as the amount of demand for each type of facility based on user information where available.

Soccer Fields

Current number of fields: 16 fields (city-owned)
Current level of service: 1 field per 7,022 residents

Target level of service: 1 field for 7,000 residents

- ▶ Current 2009 need for 112,345 population: 16 fields, no deficit
- ▶ Year 2015 need for 120,152 population: 17 fields, deficit of 1 field
- ▶ Year 2020 need for 128,404 population: 18 fields, deficit of 2 fields

Key issues: A key issue is the distribution of the fields. All soccer fields are currently located in Griffin Park. As the City grows, fields will be needed in all sectors of Norman. In particular fields should be provided west of I-35, potentially at Ruby Grant Park. The fields in Griffin Park are programmed and maintained by the Norman Youth Soccer Association. Currently this arrangement is working well.

Additional fields may be needed at the Griffin Park Soccer Complex to create a stronger regional tournament level facility. Expansion to state owned lands south of Robinson should be considered if this land or area parkland can be used.

Level of need: Low in terms of additional fields, high need in terms of distribution of fields.

Location of existing fields:

- ▶ 16 fields at Griffin Park
- ▶ 4 small fields at YMCA complex (private)

Soccer fields at Griffin Park



Soccer fields at Griffin Park





Baseball Fields

Current number of fields: 21 fields
Current level of service: 1 field per 5,350 residents

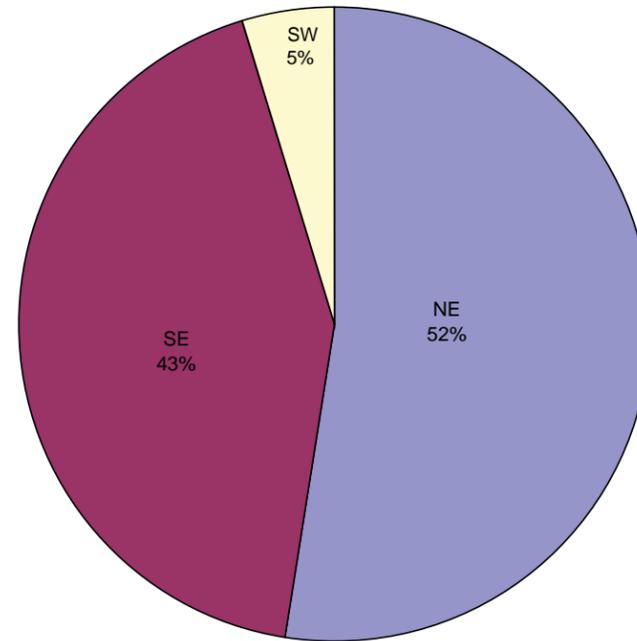
- Target level of service: 1 field for 5,000 residents
- ▶ Current 2009 need for 112,345 population: 22 fields, deficit of 1 field
 - ▶ Year 2015 need for 120,152 population: 24 fields, deficit of 3 fields
 - ▶ Year 2020 need for 128,404 population: 26 fields, deficit of 5 fields

Key issues: There currently are no baseball fields located west of I-35. There is a large portion of residents living on the western side of the City, and they are currently underserved. Future population is expected to grow towards the southeast, so continued distribution of baseball facilities will be important.

Level of need: Medium need in terms of additional fields, high need in terms of distribution of fields in faster growing sectors of the City.

- Location of existing fields:
- ▶ 1 field at Falls Lakeview Park
 - ▶ 3 fields at Little Axe Park
 - ▶ 1 field at Rotary Park
 - ▶ 10 fields at Griffin Park
 - ▶ 6 fields at Reaves Park

Location of Baseball Fields



Baseball fields at Griffin Park



Baseball fields at Reaves Park

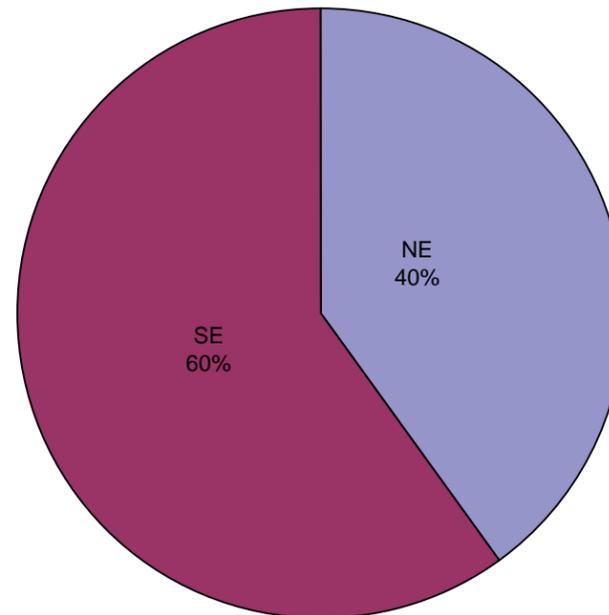




Softball fields at Reaves Park



Location of Softball Fields



Softball Fields

Current number of fields: 10 fields
 Current level of service: 1 field per 11,235 residents

- Target level of service: 1 field for 9,000 residents
- ▶ Current 2009 need for 112,345 population: 12 fields, deficit of 2 fields
 - ▶ Year 2015 need for 120,152 population: 13 fields, deficit of 3 fields
 - ▶ Year 2020 need for 128,404 population: 14 fields, deficit of 4 fields

Key issues: The City needs to provide softball fields of various sizes, both for adults and youth softball teams. The current softball fields are located in convenient locations in the center of the City. However, as Norman grows, softball fields will need to be located in the western and eastern portions of the City.

Level of need: Medium

- Location of existing fields:
- ▶ 4 fields at Griffin Park
 - ▶ 6 fields at Reaves Park

Softball fields at Reaves Park



Softball fields at Griffin Park





Tennis Courts

Current number of courts: 22 courts
Current level of service: 1 court per 5,107 residents

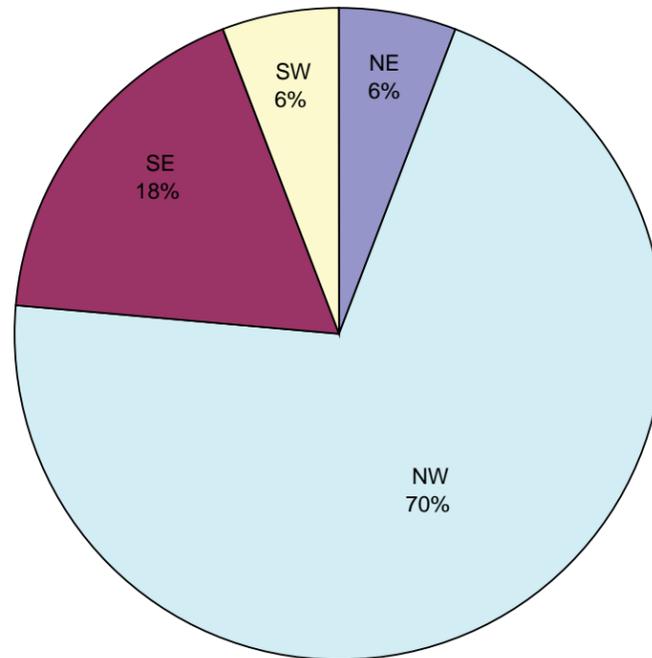
Target level of service: 1 court for 7,000 residents
▶ Current 2009 need for 112,345 population: 16 courts, no deficit
▶ Year 2015 need for 120,152 population: 17 courts, no deficit
▶ Year 2020 need for 128,404 population: 18 courts, no deficit

Key issues: The majority of tennis courts are located in Westwood Park. These courts are in good condition. The remaining courts are in adequate condition. The fence surrounding the court in Lions Park and Normandy Park need renovation.

Level of need: Low

Location of existing courts:
▶ 2 courts at Lions Park
▶ 1 court at Normandy Park
▶ 1 court at Rotary Park
▶ 12 courts at Westwood Park
▶ 4 courts at 12th Ave. Recreation Center
▶ 2 courts at Whittier Recreation Center

Location of Tennis Courts



Tennis court at Lions Park



Tennis court at Westwood Park

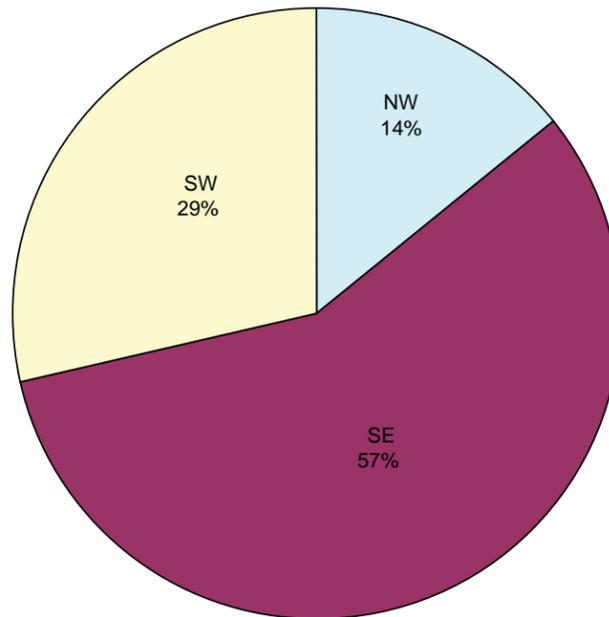


Tennis court at Normandy Park





Location of Volleyball Courts (outdoor)



Volleyball Courts (outdoor)

Current number of courts: 9 courts
 Current level of service: 1 court per 12,483 residents

- Target level of service: 1 court for 11,000 residents
- ▶ Current 2009 need for 112,345 population: 10 courts, deficit of 1 court
 - ▶ Year 2015 need for 120,152 population: 11 courts, deficit of 2 courts
 - ▶ Year 2020 need for 128,404 population: 12 courts, deficit of 3 courts

Key issues: There currently are no outdoor volleyball courts in the northeast sector of the City. The volleyball courts at Normandy Park, Prairie Creek Park, and Rotary Park are in poor condition. There is no designated court layout or adequate fall surface. These three courts need to be renovated to true sand volleyball courts. Players are also required to bring their own nets. Nets are not provided by the City because of vandalism and theft.

Level of need: Medium need for additional courts, renovation of existing courts, and distribution of future courts.

- Location of existing courts:
- ▶ 1 court at Andrews Park
 - ▶ 1 court at Normandy Park
 - ▶ 1 court at Prairie Creek Park
 - ▶ 1 court at Rotary Park
 - ▶ 4 courts at Reaves Park
 - ▶ 1 court at Sunrise Park

